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the Mennonite

January 5, 1999

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Consultation comments

It is encouraging to know that a Jerusalem Conference will convene to address concerns about church membership and homosexuality ("General Boards Approve Consultation to Address Membership, Homosexuality Before St. Louis 99," Dec. 8). One of the salient dimensions of the Acts 15 conference was an awareness that the church had become multicultural and international. Noting the involvement of the Antioch church leadership in that conference and the international nature of the Antioch church, it is likely that representatives were present from Asia, Africa and Europe as well as the Middle East.

Today the Mennonite church is also international. Fifty-five percent of the worldwide church membership is from younger churches. These churches have often sought counsel from the long-established churches in Europe and America in their times of discernment.

When North American Mennonites convene their Jerusalem Conference, will there be a commitment to hearing the counsel of the younger churches? Will there be an awareness that we do not walk Christ's way alone? My perception is that younger churches are following the North American church conversation with concern. They would have helpful counsel to offer if we are ready to listen. We sought their counsel when the confession of faith was developed. Will their voice also be heard in our Jerusalem Conference?—*David W. Shenk, Klaipeda, Lithuania*

On Dec. 5, I read about the general boards calling for a consultation on membership and homosexuality issues. In our congregation the next morning we sang "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy." I would like to suggest that this hymn become the theme song for any consultations on these issues. Perhaps it could also become the theme song for our integrated denomination as well.—*Brent Sprunger, Newton, Kan.*

Conference, congregation, conciliation?

Re "Southeast Conference Disciplinary Action Maintains Warm Relations With Congregation" (Dec. 15): A few corrections are in order. First, a factual error: Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship did not agree to "revisit its position on homosexuality and church membership," as the article stated. Rather, AMF agreed to revisit its decision-making process about membership. This includes, but is not limited to, our consensus decision that sexual orientation is not a bar to full membership at AMF. The difference is significant. The process and not the outcome is at issue.

Second, and more important, the article failed to convey the profound grief felt by many AMF members concerning this decision. We were backed into a corner where our options were to be voted out of the Mennonite Church, withdraw completely from Southeast or close our doors to gay and lesbian Mennonites. Faced with these unacceptable choices, we made a good faith effort at the mediation process and did our best to find another way. That way is to remain in as much relationship as is tolerable to Southeast without compromising our policy of hospitality to all.

This solution is clearly problematic because while it resolves the immediate issue facing the conference, it does not address justice and acceptance for gay and lesbian people. Until the church comes to a point where all can truly agree and disagree in love and fellowship, we will continue to hack up the body of Christ. Such dismemberment is nothing to celebrate. That there was no acrimony or bitterness expressed at the Dec. 5 delegate meeting does not heal the divisions between Southeast and AMF. Nor does it reflect the sorrow and dismay that we, as part of AMF, feel as a result of this process. We believe in the mediation process and that it was very ably carried out. Nonetheless, the outcome is not a radical departure from other acts of exclusion in the Mennonite Church.—*Joyce Short, Daniel Schultz, Tim Wyse and Elaine Swartzentruber, Atlanta*

It was both encouraging and painful to read about Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship and Southeast Conference. It was encouraging to see that the fellowship and the conference, with the help of Mennonite Conciliation Services (MCS) were able to talk through their differences even though there was a parting of the ways.

It was painful because it was a pointed reminder of the process that led to the expulsion of Germantown Mennonite Church in Philadelphia from Franconia Conference. No one involved in that process, myself included, had the wisdom or insight to seek the kind of help MCS provides. Other than the secret ballot vote, the most painful aspect of that experience was the almost complete absence of conversation between the congregation—despite the welcoming by the congregation of such conversation—and those who could not live

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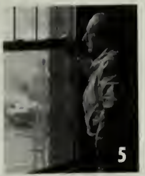

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readers say

with a congregation that allows gays and lesbians as members—the kind of conversation that Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Dave Brubaker facilitated.—*Boyd Reese, Bridgewater, Va.*

The perils of fishing

The report of Merrill Ewert on Mennonite Central Committee workers ("MCCers, Evangelicals Differ in Development Work," Nov. 3) shows the need to leave old models behind as we move into the 21st century. Ewert says MCC workers emphasize enabling people to fish rather than just giving them fish to eat. It may be true that giving people fish only allows them to eat for a day, but there is now ample evidence that teaching people to fish destroys the fishery. In the United States alone there are nearly 80 overfished stocks and 10 additional stocks approaching an overfished condition.

The United States and Canada are the most intensive consumers of resources in the world. We cannot merely export these models under the guise of community-based development without a much deeper understanding of long-term environmental sustainability.

After all, what good is a church if you don't have a habitable planet to put it on?—*David E. Ortman, Seattle*

Lack of understanding

I understand that several area conferences are indicating a reluctance to join the new Mennonite Church unless membership standards for congregations entering the new denomination are decided on first. Perhaps I am naive, but this leaves me very puzzled. Do each of these area conferences really want the denomination to have authority to tell them who can and cannot be a member? Surely I am failing to understand something.—*Robert L. Ramseyer, Bluffton, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Micah Marty

God thunders wondrously with his voice;
he does great things that we cannot comprehend.
For to the snow he says, "Fall on the earth";
and the shower of rain, his heavy shower of rain,
serves as a sign on everyone's hand,
so that all whom he has made may know it.
Then the animals go into their lairs
and remain in their dens.
From its chamber comes the whirlwind,
and cold from the scattering winds.
By the breath of God ice is given,
and the broad waters are frozen fast.
He loads the thick cloud with moisture;
the clouds scatter his lightning.
They turn round and round by his guidance,
to accomplish all that he commands them
on the face of the habitable world.
Whether for correction, or for his land,
or for love, he causes it to happen.—*Job 37:5-13*

Presence

by Martin Marty

Above all let me live in your presence. Let every day combine the beauty of spring, the brightness of summer, the abundance of autumn, and the repose of winter.—St. Thomas Aquinas

The gift of simplicity brings change in the midst of continuity. It does not bring the mere and constant change that can unsettle and devastate the spirit, but instead that which overcomes the mere and constant sameness that can numb and induce boredom. Those who live in zones where seasons change drastically do well to let the changes signal both differing gifts and possibilities as well as a need for the warmth and vitality of cherished continuity.

Climate control, we call it: We chop and burn the wood or turn up the thermostat for warmth in winter. In summer we ice the water and turn down the thermostat to cool the air. Busily we twist and turn dials, open and close windows and shutters, and change apparel to adjust to the two intervening seasons.

Doing all these permits some of the beauty and brightness, the abundance and repose of the four seasons to be enjoyed year-round. But can one own this beauty, and only this, daily? Not in any simple way. Millions have suffered physically from the floods of spring, the drought of summer, the famine of fall and the violence of winter. Spiritually, people suffer as well.

The One who sets the seasons, however, comes as a presence through each of them. Where we choose to ignore that presence, change devastates or sameness upsets. Where that presence is realized, each day makes available for our receiving a goodness that mixes change and continuity in all seasons of weather, for all seasons of the soul.

The text and photo on this page come from the book *When True Simplicity Is Gained: Finding Spiritual Clarity in a Complex World* by Martin Marty and Micah Marty (Eerdmans, 1998). The book combines text by Martin Marty with photographs by his son Micah. It is the fourth book they've done together. The book's title comes from the Shaker hymn "The Gift to Be Simple," and Micah Marty's black-and-white photographs portray Shaker arts, artifacts and buildings. Martin Marty's meditations are based on prayers of the church and emphasize the gift of simplicity.

God is not finished with me yet

Reflections on unfinished agenda upon turning 70

by Edgar Stoesz

As I approach my 70th birthday, I am nowhere near the saint I thought in my youth I would be by this stage in life. Nor am I as good as I still hope to be, but God and I are still working at it.

I have made some progress, to be sure. I don't get angry as often. I am not so quick to speak and I am more likely to take into account how others may be affected by what I say—although with some disgusting lapses. My hormonal drives are more moderate. I am less driven, even to the point of being amused by the ambitions of those who are in that earlier stage of life.

Mostly I have enjoyed my 60s. It has been a good stage of life for me, but I find myself perplexed over so much unfinished agenda. I will be more specific.

My inability to let go of accumulated grudges and hurts: It doesn't get easier. Maybe it gets more difficult as the list gets longer and the arteries harder. I mean to release that stuff, I would like to, but it lingers, like nuclear waste, and distracts from the person I would like to be. Maybe that is what Paul means when he challenges us to release the weights that accumulate and interfere with our ability to run the race.

My growing tendency to scorn inexperience: The Boomer generation has not been as receptive to the accumulated wisdom of our generation, and that makes me cynical. I am amused by their zeal and confidence, and I wonder if they know how silly they sometimes look, doing the things we used to do. At the same time, I remind myself that we want them to take over. But I always imagined it would be different.

My undisciplined approach to spirituality: Prayer and contemplation have never been easy for me, and I don't find them getting easier. Having more time is offset by being more set in my ways. I am hoping this can still happen—maybe when I really retire—but as of now it is mostly as it was, which is not altogether as I would like it to be.

I could go on—the list is long. I can only plead with God and others around me to be patient; God is not finished with me yet. We're still working at it.

Edgar Stoesz lives in Akron, Pa.

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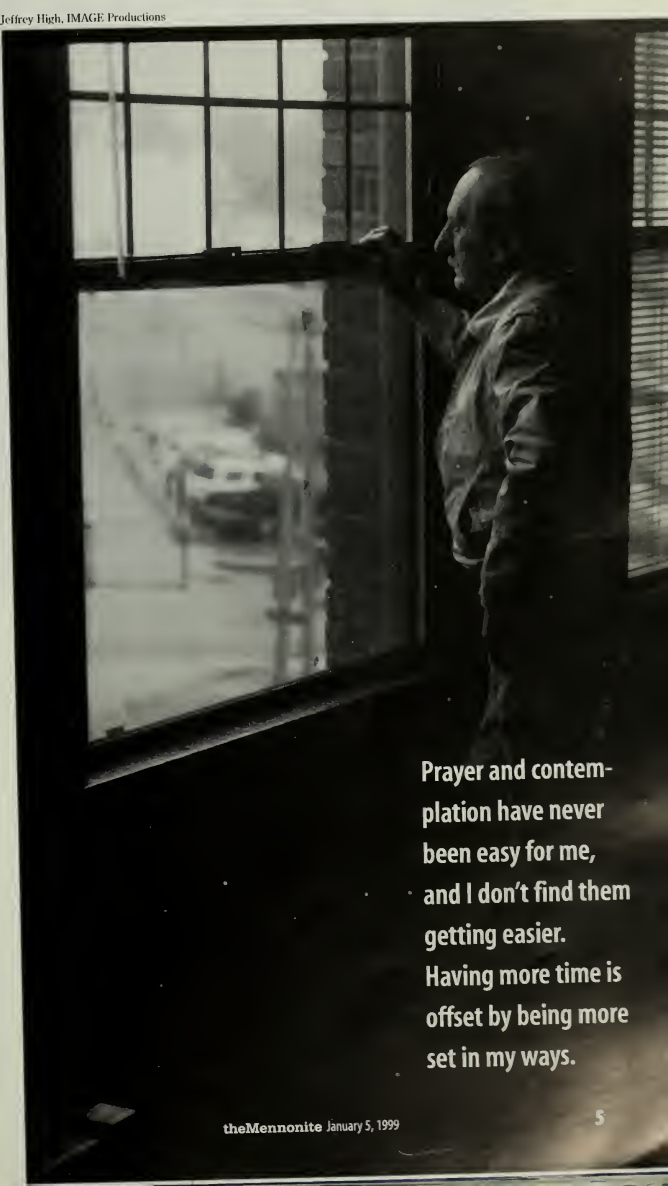

Prayer and contemplation have never been easy for me, and I don't find them getting easier. Having more time is offset by being more set in my ways.

The kingdom is not out of the reach of sinful humanity, not hidden in an idyllic past, not limited to a reward in the distant future. It is here, now, among us, within us. And it makes us who we are.

Mark Beach (MCC)

The kingdom of God

by Joan L. Hockman

"The kingdom of God" is a phrase familiar to all of us. When we try to define it, however, we find that it is a mysterious and elusive thing. Jesus used parables to teach us about it. He likened it to a sower who sowed good seed, to a tiny mustard seed, to yeast hidden in flour, to a treasure hidden in a field, to a net let down into a lake. These examples show us a kingdom at once near and obscure, of great value but easily overlooked.

John the Baptist, more succinct but no less mysterious, merely said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He made no attempt to define the kingdom but chose rather to announce its arrival and tell us what our response to it should be.

In Luke 17 we find the Pharisees also wondering about the kingdom of God. Jesus told them, "The kingdom of God does not come by your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is' or, 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you." And this, I believe, is the heart of the mystery: The kingdom of God is here.

I teach a remarkable adult Sunday school class at Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church. Only one member was born into a Mennonite family; the rest of us come from widely varying backgrounds. After studying some basic theology and church history, we are now focusing on the specific history and theology of our Anabaptist heritage. We are doing a series I have called "How to Be Mennonite for Fun and Eternal Profit." One Sunday I asked them what they thought was the essence of "Mennonite-ness." They suggested service, the peace position, community, the ethic of love and humility. These are certainly a part of who we are, but I believe they are evidence of something deeper, more fundamental, that lies at the root of who we are as Mennonites.

The heart of "Mennonite-ness," of both our theology and the applied theology of how we go about our daily lives, is our belief that the kingdom of God is here.

The heart of "Mennonite-ness," of both our theology and the applied theology of how we go about our daily lives, is our belief that the kingdom of God is here. We are set apart from other groups by the fact that we live as part of the kingdom of God. We know the kingdom is "not yet" in its fullness, but we also know that it is here and that we are already part of it.

This understanding of the kingdom of God is a result of our theology of the incarnation. When the Word became flesh and came among us, the kingdom of God broke into time and space. Because we carry within ourselves the image of God and because we have been united with Christ, we are citizens of God's kingdom. That kingdom is not far away, out of the reach of sinful humanity; it is not hidden in an idyllic past; it is not limited to a reward in the distant future. It is here, now, among us, within us. And it makes us who we are.

We Mennonites are defined by our understanding that we live in the kingdom of God. Others often know us for our emphases of love, service, global awareness, peace, justice and community. These are some of the outward consequences of living in the kingdom of God.

Love: Mennonites have an ethic of love because love characterizes the kingdom of God. We do not kill or go to war because these things have no place in God's kingdom. We have been called "the Sermon on the Mount people," and that is good, for that sermon describes life in the kingdom of God, and we believe the kingdom of God is here.

Service: Mennonites are people of service because we follow a servant king, and service characterizes his kingdom. We support Mennonite Central Committee, do voluntary service and work for Mennonite Disaster Service

Mennonites have an ethic of love because love characterizes the kingdom of God.

is here

because the kingdom of God is here. We shop at Ten Thousand Villages, can meat and make soap, make school kits and health kits and send towels to other countries because the kingdom of God is here.

Global awareness: Mennonites have a global ethic because our King loves and cares for all people. We have been called "the more-with-less people" because we believe that the kingdom of God is here and that globally responsible behavior is necessary in that kingdom. We go to Mennonite World Conference to worship with brothers and sisters from around the world because there the kingdom of God is celebrated visibly. We send our college students on service terms so that they will learn and experience the truth of that kingdom. We are a peripatetic people, with full passports containing stamps of countries unknown to many people, because the kingdom of God is here.

Peace and justice: Mennonites work for peace and justice because these are characteristics of the kingdom of God. We support Christian Peacemaker Teams, the mediation work of MCC and the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program because we are members of God's kingdom.

Community: And we are people of community, a people known for good singing and good food, because the kingdom of God manifests itself among us. We value relationships, consensus and process in our life as a people, because we are a part of the kingdom of God. We work to achieve a polity of love rather than force, consensus rather than violence, because we and our polity form a living part of God's kingdom.

We are not perfect, as individuals or as a people. For that we await the fullness of the kingdom, to come in the fullness of time.

But we have a vision of a kingdom at once here and not yet. Our eyes see a reality the world doesn't see. We are called to live out something invisible, to embody within our community a reality not known by the world. And in this common vision we have coherence, our eccentricities make sense, our countercultural position is inevitable. In our kingdom life together, we give witness to the God who is our King. And, as my Sunday school class will testify, others are drawn to us by what they see.

The kingdom of God is here. We are each a part of that kingdom. We are a part of the mustard seed, the yeast, the hidden treasure, the net let down into the lake. The kingdom of God is here; the kingdom of God is among you; the kingdom of God is within you. Live in the kingdom of God.

We are called to live out something invisible, to embody within our community a reality not known by the world.

Joan L. Hockman lives in Topeka, Ind., and does spiritual direction. This article is based on a talk she gave last October at an Indiana-Michigan Conference women's mission rally.

Abraham and Sarah's spiritual descendants still multiplying as church planting nears goal

NEWTON, Kan.—The General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) is ahead of schedule for planting 50 new churches in North America. Forty-one congregations have joined area conferences and/or the General Conference Mennonite Church since 1992, while another 29 congregations are emerging.

"We're on track to reach our goal by the end of 1999, two years early," says Lois Barrett, executive secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries.

GC delegates approved the church-planting project at their triennial sessions in Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1992, passing a "Resolution to Laugh with Abraham and Sarah." The measure called for planting 50 new congregations by 2001. The project's name comes from the biblical story in which Abraham and Sarah laughed in disbelief at being told Sarah would bear a child in her old age and that their descendants would number "as grains of sand and stars in the sky." The name also refers to Sarah and Abraham's joyous laughter at the arrival of their son, whom they named Isaac, or "Laughter."

"We want spiritual descendants as numerous as [were promised to Abraham and Sarah]," says Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for CHM and Abraham and Sarah program coordinator.

Before the resolution came to GC delegates at Sioux Falls, Miller contacted mission ministers and mission committees from all the GC area conferences. "I wanted to know what kind of goal they thought we could reach, what would stretch them but was still possible," she says.

"Some in 1992 thought 50 was too high," Barrett says. "And it's turning out to be a conservative estimate."

The 70 planted or emerging Abraham and Sarah congregations are located in 14 states and five provinces, from Nanaimo, B.C., to Boca Raton, Fla., and from Winnipeg to Ferris, Texas. Of those congregations, 37 speak languages other than English (see box below).

Our progress shows that God has been working and that a lot of people have been praying in the prayer network.

—*Marilyn Miller*

Members of Hmong Mennonite Church erect the congregation's sign outside their Arvada, Colo., meeting place. Established in 1995, Hmong is one of 41 new congregations established as part of a General Conference Mennonite Church program to plant 50 congregations by 2001. More than half of the church plants speak languages other than English.

Between 235 and 250 *Abraham and Sarah Prayerletters* go out several times a year to congregations and individuals, providing updates on the progress of new congregations and including a list of emerging congregations for special prayer attention. The *Prayerletters* are edited by longtime overseas workers Eudene and Levi Keidel, now living in Fort Wayne, Ind.

"Our progress shows that God has been working and that a lot of people have been praying in the prayer network," Miller says.

CHM provides training, consultation and resources to congregational leaders and to area conference mission committees, which do the actual church planting. CHM has also provided occasional financial subsidies for new congregations. In addition, Abraham and Sarah Caravans have traveled to several of the new congregations for one to two weeks. Caravan members have helped with building and renovation projects and activities to help attract and introduce people to the new congregations.

CHM has connected the Abraham and Sarah project with its City on a Hill program, which each year awards a $25,000 grant to an urban ministries initiative in the United States or Canada.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Languages of the faith

Of the 41 new and 29 emerging congregations resulting from the Abraham and Sarah church-planting program, 37 speak languages other than English: Spanish, 12; Indonesian, seven; Lao, three; Chinese, Ethiopian, Hmong, Taiwanese and Vietnamese, two each; Cambodian, French, German, Japanese and multilingual, one each.—*GCMC News Service*

Living a miracle

Central, North Americans continue response to Mitch

AKRON, Pa.—Carmen Levia didn't have much. And after Hurricane Mitch caused Nicaragua's Lake Managua to overflow its banks and wash away her home, she has even less.

But on Dec. 10, Levia had just a bit more, thanks to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the agency's supporters. She received one of the first 260 hurricane relief kits distributed by MCC. "I don't feel so alone anymore," says Levia, who now lives in a warehouse and sleeps on plastic sheeting on the cement floor.

"People were overjoyed and surprised by the buckets," says MCC relief worker Jim Hershberger, who helped distribute the kits in villages around Lake Managua. "The soap, toothpaste and towels were items they could use immediately. Most [recipients] are Christian, so they really appreciated the Bibles that were also included."

It has been more than two months since Mitch wreaked unprecedented havoc through Central America. Since then, Mennonites there and across North America have responded generously to needs in several countries.

Help in Honduras: Honduran Mennonites are helping about 6,000 families, or 30,000 to 40,000 people, mostly by providing food. In San Pedro Sula, MAMA, a ministry of the Honduran Mennonite Church, presents Christian stories, songs and activities plus a snack for the children living in a village of tents in the parking lot of a city stadium. An estimated 2,800 people displaced by Mitch are living on the stadium grounds, and another 2,200 people are expected to join them.

"We're going to give thanks to God this morning," MAMA staff member Lavinio de Ochoa told the children one morning. "Do you know why? Because we were spared."

"Si! (yes!)," shouted the children.

MAMA is also helping 600 families in poor neighborhoods in the area and has organized medical help and provided food and cooking utensils. MAMA is also sending volunteer teachers to shelters to work with children who have lost a month or more of school time. With the Honduran Mennonite Church, MAMA hopes to repair 200 homes and build 150 more over the next year. Church staff are planning food-for-work projects to clean homes, streets, health centers and other facilities.

"There are two kinds of miracles: one in which God does the will of humans and one in which humans do the will of God," says Honduran Mennonite leader Melvin Fernandez. "We are now living that second kind of miracle."

MCC photo by Ed Stamm Miller

Mennonite Central Committee worker Holly Herr (left) and Dorcas Ramos bag beans in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, part of a project of local Mennonite youth to provide victims of Hurricane Mitch with food, laundry soap and other supplies. The items were purchased with emergency funds supplied by MCC. Herr, from Harrisonburg, Va., is serving with MCC's SALT program for young adults. Her assignment in a daycare center has been interrupted by responding to needs caused by the hurricane.

A Honduran Mennonite congregation has donated a block-making machine to one community so people there can begin rebuilding houses. Another congregation served as a temporary health clinic even though it was damaged by flood waters.

Members of the Mennonite colonies in Belize, largely spared Mitch's wrath, have responded to needs in neighboring Honduras with food, fresh water, building supplies and a food-for-work project.

For some Belizian Mennonites, their response is rooted in having survived Hurricane Hattie in 1961. "Since we experienced a hurricane 37 years ago, we still remember what it was like," says Esther Reimer of the Spanish Lookout colony.

Funds for farmers: Meanwhile, 66 Nicaraguan farm families are the first recipients of hurricane reconstruction aid from Mennonite Economic Development Associates. Each family will receive $150 to replace crops destroyed by Mitch. The assistance is part of a $640,000 package of grants and loans MEDA is providing for hurricane victims in Nicaragua.

"It's as if the land was scraped bare by a giant paw," says MEDA president Ben Sprunger following a December visit to the region. "Where fertile valleys once produced crops, now there are only boulders, stones, tangled trees and raw earth."

In Broadway, Va., Mennonite-affiliated Cornerstone Church and Cornerstone Christian School raised $14,000 for hurricane relief through their Christmas musical and dramatic production. The five mid-December presentations drew 4,200 people.—*MCC News Service with MEDA News Service and Ken Gonyer*

Mitch contributions boost MCC finances

Thanks in part to Hurricane Mitch, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has seen U.S. donations soar in 1998.

Giving to MCC by U.S. contributors totaled $16 million through November 1998, compared to $13.3 million the year before. Of the $2.7 million jump, $2 million was earmarked for MCC's response to Mitch. Included in that giving were funds from 3,000 new individual donors.

MCC has received $3.6 million in contributions from the United States and Canada for Mitch.—*MCC News Service*

MEDA paved Haitian road to restoration

Needy workers received $1.5 million in wages

WINNIPEG—It's only a gravel road, but for the hill-dwellers of Haiti, it's a lifeline to the outside world. It's their only way to bring in food supplies, reach medical facilities and transport products to market.

The road is the result of FURREC, a Mennonite Economic Development Agency (MEDA)-managed program to refurbish Haiti's infrastructure while creating short-term jobs and injecting cash into a starved economy. The program came into being four years ago when Haiti's already desperate national economy lost thousands of jobs as a result of the economic embargo imposed following a military coup.

The Canadian International Development Agency provided several million dollars to MEDA to help jump-start the economy and get cash into the hands of the poor who had suffered the worst during the embargo.

The MEDA project, which ended last month, created 716,313 person-days of employment and paid $1.5 million (U.S.) in wages to Haitians. One hundred twenty-five miles of roads were rehabilitated; 44 miles of irrigation canals and nine miles of drainage canals were repaired; five bridges were built; three schools were rehabilitated; six springs were improved; 993,558 tree seedlings were produced and planted; 9,196 fruit trees grafted; 3,209 people were trained; and 4,193 people received literacy training. Overall, an estimated 20,000 families benefited directly from the project.

"It gave short-term jobs to people who needed the cash the worst," says Willys Geffrard, the project's manager.

Most people who worked on the various FURREC projects said they were able to satisfy important household needs with the money they earned. Some paid school fees and bought books for their children; others purchased basic necessities, such as food and medical care. Some workers invested in livestock and gardens.

But FURREC's results were not just personal. In many cases, decrepit roads that were little more than mule paths were widened, flattened and terraced to provide suitable all-weather transportation.

Haitians also noted that soil conservation efforts have protected their lands and increased crops. Over the years many farmers had come to depend on expensive and scarce chemical fertilizers which over time deplete the soil. The use of compost has helped regenerate the soil and combat certain types of destructive insects. A follow-up program is being studied for further environmental steps and to train partner organizations. An application has been made to the Canadian International Development Agency to fund the next phase.—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

EMU students start scholarship

It costs a lot of money to attend college these days. No one knows that better than a college student.

That's why students at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., have started a need-based scholarship fund for future students.

"We're concerned about the growing number of students who lack the necessary financial resources to attend and reap the benefits of an EMU education," says Lara Fisher, an EMU senior from Harrisonburg.

So far $6,500 has been raised toward the goal of $25,000. A large share of that money was generated during a student workday in October.

MBM worker leads Swedes on third Peruvian visit

LIMA, Peru—For the third time, Tom Rutschman, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Sweden, led a group of teachers and students from Jokkmokk, Sweden, to Lima, Peru, this past fall.

All trips have been made with financial support from either the Swedish government or KLM Airlines, which covered the cost of the first trip in 1995 as the result of a contest.

"I was really surprised that the Ministry of Education granted us a stipend for the trip," says Rutschman, who is a teacher and pastor in Jokkmokk. "But they obviously see the importance of exposing Swedes to life in a developing country. I sure see how this experience changes people's perspectives on life."

Much of the time was spent with street children in Lima. Through the Swedish Save the Children, the group was put into contact with Generacion, a Peruvian home for street children. The Swedes met 13-year-old Angelo, whose bandages from being hit by a car needed to be changed and who bravely tried not to cry as his sores were cleaned. And Miguel Angel, whose drug-addicted girlfriend left him with his 6-month-old daughter dying of AIDS. And Osito, whose mother died and whose new stepmother didn't want any of the husband's children to live with them.

Then there is Emerson, whom Rutschman first met four years ago and who is no longer on the street. Emerson now works and studies but admits that street life has left him without emotions. "I can't cry," he laments.

The Swedish group also visited Characato, a shantytown in southern Peru, where students and people from Jokkmokk are helping to build a multifunctional center that will house a day-care center, a health center and a work cooperative.—*MBM News Service*

Correction: Two English Mennonites paid fines of about $60 for their protest at an arms fair. The amount was incorrect in the Dec. 29 *The Mennonite.*

MCC Canada to redirect portion of electric bill

WINNIPEG—Hydroelectric power benefits many people. But the Cross Lake Cree community in northern Manitoba has lost a lot more than it has gained.

Hydroelectric development in the 1970s caused flooding, affected water levels and cut Cross Lake's ancestral ties to land and water which produced their food and livelihood. Government agreements with the five Cree bands remain unfulfilled.

So Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada has decided to deposit 10 percent of its electric bill—about $140 (Canadian) a month—in a trust fund as a way for the Cree to collect on debts owed them by the provincial and federal governments. A 1977 agreement with the federal and Manitoba governments and Manitoba Hydro power company was supposed to provide the Cree with compensation and alternative means of livelihood.

"Before Manitoba Hydro came and put dams in the Nelson River, ... I was a trapper, I was a fisherman, I was a hunter," says chief Sandy Beardy. "From those three I managed to raise my family."

The decision to redirect a portion of the electric bill came at MCC Canada's annual meeting in November.

"This action reflects the delegates' frustration at the injustice experienced by the Cross Lake people," says Marv Frey, MCC Canada executive director. "We know this is a very unusual step for MCC, and we will be consulting with our constituency as well as with other church groups who have been working with the people of Cross Lake for more than 20 years."

MCC Canada's ties to Cross Lake go back to 1975 when the agency was part of an interchurch group that held public hearings on hydroelectric development in northern Canada.—*MCC Canada News Service*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Arms for raising, hugging

Lorraine Payne prays a blessing on her 5-year-old daughter, also named Lorraine, on Dec. 6 during the first anniversary celebration of Way of Life Ministries in Philadelphia. The congregation is a church plant of Lancaster Conference's Philadelphia District. More than 75 people attended the celebration.

Concord College
Menno Simons College &
Canadian Mennonite Bible College

have developed **Mennonite College Federation**, a cooperative association of colleges committed to the Biblical faith, and rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition. This partnership will lead to the significant expansion of academic programming. Over a period of several years the three colleges expect to hire a number of faculty in a variety of the social sciences, humanities and other areas.

The three colleges invite applications for the following
faculty positions
scheduled to be filled for September, 1999:

Menno Simons College (MSC):
three positions in *Conflict Resolution Studies* (CRS)
Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) :
one position in *humanities or social sciences*,
one position in *Anabaptist studies/Church History*, and
one position in *organizational leadership and management*
Concord College (CC):
one position in *humanities or social sciences*

Qualifications

- Ph.D. , completed or nearly complete (candidates for the CRS positions will be expected to have done graduate work in that discipline)
- commitment to the Christian faith and mission of the college

Please direct applications or inquiries regarding these positions, or similar positions which will open up in the coming years to the following:
MSC: President; Menno Simons College; 380 Spence St.;
Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9 (204) 786-9895; fax: (204) 783-3699;
e-mail: george.richert@uwinnipeg.ca
CMBC: Dean; CMBC; 600 Shaftesbury Blvd; Winnipeg, MB
R3P 0M4 (204) 888-6781; fax: (204) 831-5675;
e-mail: dean@confmenno.ca
CC: Dean, Concord College; 169 Riverton Ave.; Winnipeg, MB
R2L 2E5 (204) 669-6583; fax: (204) 663-2468;
e-mail:drdyck@concordcollege.mb.ca

by the way ...

Sixty-one percent of people of color in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church have never been members of any other denomination.
—Parkwood Research Associates

School's out for MCC center in Burkina Faso

OUGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso—The close of 1998 meant the close of a Mennonite Central Committee language school in Burkina Faso.

For more than 10 years, MCC workers going to French-speaking countries in Africa —Burkina Faso, Chad and Congo—had studied at the center. But as the number of volunteers has declined, the center has increasingly become a resource for other agencies. Among those which used the center were mission organizations—including Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Nazarene and Presbyterian —and development agencies such as Save the Children Fund and the Peace Corps. Individuals preparing for work in West and Central Africa also studied at the center.*—MCC News Service*

CMC leader to retire after St. Louis convention

WINNIPEG—Helmut Harder, general secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, has announced his retirement, effective in August after the joint convention in St. Louis. He has been CMC general secretary since 1990.

Harder says the highlights of his tenure have been visiting congregations on behalf of CMC, the integration of CMC with the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, and involvement in drafting the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

Harder taught at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg from 1962 until he was named CMC general secretary. While at CMBC he also served as executive director for the Foundation Series Sunday school curriculum and as the school's interim president.

Longtime media worker to leave position

HARRISONBURG, Va.—After 43 years of working with production and distribution of media materials as a mission outreach for Mennonite churches, Kenneth J. Weaver will step down this summer as director of Mennonite Board of Missions' Mennonite Media.

Weaver's career in church media began in 1956, and since then his work has ranged from traditional radio broadcasts to TV spots to videos to the Internet.

"As we respond to the changing media communications field and move into the new Mennonite Church structure, Mennonite Media will need extensive networking with leadership in the new Mennonite Church, media professionals and communications departments of other denominations," he says. "Also, at age 67, this seems like a good time for me to pass that leadership role to the next generation, who grew up in the electronic communication age."*—MBM News Service*

Provident to consolidate Ohio bookstores

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Provident Bookstores has added another Ohio bookstore, which will be combined with another into one operation.

Provident, owned and operated by Mennonite Publishing House, at the end of December became owners of Loaves and Fishes Christian Book Store in Wooster. The store had been owned by founders Phil and Betty Frank since 1974. In July 1998, Provident had acquired Martin's Christian Book Store in Orrville.

"We want to combine these two businesses into a new location with more than twice the combined space and selection," says Provident director Jack Scott.

Bluffton to break ground on new building

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College will mark the start of construction for its new academic center with a Jan. 12 groundbreaking ceremony. President Lee Snyder will present her state-of-the-college address in Founders Hall at 10 a.m. and then lead a procession to the construction site. The new facility, which will include classrooms, offices and media and computer centers, is part of a $10.5 million capital campaign.

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Births

Beachy, Lydia Victoria, Jan. 29, 1997, received for adoption Nov. 18, 1998, by Dan and Tina (Ginder) Beachy, Harrisonburg, Va.

Beck, Gabriel Aaron, Nov. 22, to Deana and Duane Beck, Archbold, Ohio.

Bontrager, Benjamin Lee, Dec. 13, to Fritz and Kris (Miller) Bontrager, Shipshewana, Ind.

Burkholder, Justin Kenneth, Dec. 10, to Karen (Frankenfield) and Kenneth Burkholder, Souderton, Pa.

Chrisman, Isaac Josef, Oct. 20, to Andrew and Jil (Scalglia) Chrisman, Boise, Idaho.

Gingerich, Harrison James, Dec. 12, to Jennifer (Eder) and Jeremy Gingerich, Canby, Ore.

Hurst, Kortney Noelle, Dec. 17, to Randall and Sandra (Peachey) Hurst, Stevens, Pa.

Litwiller, Matthew Joseph, Dec. 15, to Heather and Matthew Litwiller, Washington, Iowa.

Musick, James Edmond, Nov. 28, to Boyd and Mary Musick, Monterey, Va.

Mierau, Ryne Connor, Dec. 10, to Robert and Tammy (Schwindt) Mierau, Seward, Neb.

O'Donnell, Nathan Joseph, Nov. 19, to Denise (Godshall) and Terry O'Donnell, Hatfield, Pa.

Peters, Katherine Lynn, Dec. 6, to Douglas and Roberta (Rodgers) Peters, Ashland, Neb.

Poncé, Gabriel Antonio, Dec. 6, to Anjelican (Campos) and Josh Poncé, Terre Haute, Ind.

Schell, Rachel Katherine, Dec. 12, to Dawn (Detweiler) and Scott Schell, Gainesville, Fla.

Shisler, Maura Devan, Dec. 4, to Joanna (Bergey) and Matthew Shisler, Telford, Pa.

Simkins, Matthew Alexander, Oct. 23, to Barbara Ann (Dean) and John Simkins, Marietta, Pa.

Wagler, Cassie Leigh, Nov. 20, to Angela and Mark Wagler, Tavistock, Ont.

Yoder, Bradi Korin, Dec. 13, to Juanita (Christner) and Rob Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.

Marriages

Guengerich/Miller: Gail Guengerich, Harrisonburg, Va., and Steven Miller, Dec. 19 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Hostetler/Sanford: Tara Renee Hostetler, West Liberty, Ohio, and Dennis James Sanford, DeGraff, Ohio, Nov. 28 at West Liberty.

Deaths

Boese, Gertrude Rinner, 85, Moundridge, Kan., died Nov. 29. Spouse: Ben Boese (deceased). Parents: Arnold and Mabel Eicher Rinner (deceased). Survivor: brother A. James Rinner. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

Brenneman, Elwyn, 79, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 9 of cancer. Spouse: Eva Yoder Brenneman. Parents: Ray and Alta Fern Miller Brenneman (deceased). Other survivors: children Jeanette Bulechek, Charlene Mullet, Debbie Birky, Larry; 14 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 12 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Detweiler, Clayton, 74, Perkasie, Pa., died Nov. 17. Spouse: Kathryn Halteman Detweiler. Parents: Clayton and Alice Detweiler (deceased). Other survivors: children Lois Alderfer, Marty Savanick, Julie Frankenfield, David, Wayne, Clayton Jr., Kevin; 15 grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 22 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie.

Eldridge, Rachel, 88, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 26. Spouse: Murl Eldridge (deceased). Parents: Levi and Minnie Pearl Miller Hooley (deceased). Survivors: children Wanda Jones, Betty Sark, Nancy Hitts, Richard Arnold, Terry Arnold; stepchildren Bonnie Arnold, Donna Fisher, Virginia Morse, Dorothy Christner; 14 grandchildren; 17 stepgrandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; 22 step-great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 29 at Goshen, Ind.

Epp, Owen, 74, Henderson, Neb., died Dec. 3. Spouse: Inez Epp. Other survivors: children Michael, Debra Mierau; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 5 at Henderson.

Freeburne, LaReta Sharp, 82, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Dec. 1. Survivors: children Jerry, Ted; three grandchildren, one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.

Gingerich, Paul, 73, Salem, Ore., died Nov. 3. Memorial service: Nov. 4 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Huber, John, 69, Lancaster, Pa., died Dec. 7 from heart problems. Spouse: Mary Huber (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Florence Myers Huber (deceased). Survivors: children Larry, Robert; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Kolb, Gerald, 57, Springs, Pa., died Dec. 13 of a heart attack. Spouse: Chamlong Kolb. Parents: Merle and Maxine Rodamer Kolb. Other survivors: daughter Dawn. Funeral: Thailand.

Lapp, Nancy Swartzentruber, 62, Sellersville, Pa., died Dec. 6 of multiple myeloma. Spouse: James Lapp. Parents: Ernest (deceased) and Fannie Swartzentruber. Other survivors: children Cindy, Michael, Philip; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec 11 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Leatherman, Abram, 86, Doylestown, Pa., died Dec. 13. Spouse: Florence Moyer Leatherman (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Bessie Leatherman (deceased). Survivors: children Shirley Godshall, Arlene DuBree; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, J. Weldon, 80, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 8 of a heart attack. Spouse: Lorene Troyer Martin. Parents: Perry and Annie Wenger Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Dennis, Jay, John, Carol Grimesey, Susan Kaylor, Rachel Swartz; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 12 at Grace Covenant Church, Harrisonburg.

Orellana, Stephen Valdemar, infant, Kitchener, Ont., died Dec. 9. Parents: Elias and Karem Orellana. Other survivor: brother Kevin. Funeral: Dec. 11 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Ryan, Ella, 88, Sarasota, Fla., died Nov. 25 of complications from a broken leg. Funeral: Nov. 28 at Bay Shore (Fla.) Mennonite Church.

Shenk, Retta Boyer, 99, Gettysburg, Pa., died Nov. 15 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Coffman Shenk (deceased). Parents: Martin and Mary Boyer (deceased). Survivors: children Charles, Martin; 11 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Gettysburg.

Stutzman, Blanche, 83, Minonk, Ill., died Dec. 9. Spouse: Carl Stutzman (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Katie Roggy King (deceased). Survivors: children Vernon, Donald, Stan, Roy, Wilma Bean; 15 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 12 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka, Ill.

Stutzman, Marion, 87, Millersburg, Ohio, died Dec. 13. Spouse (1st): Edna Beechy (deceased); (2nd): Lillie Purdy Rowe Stutzman. Parents: David and Frances Kaufman Stutzman (deceased). Other survivors: children Arlene Hart, Karen Lamp, Marjory Gerber; seven grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; seven step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Zook, Palmer, 95, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Dec. 12. Spouse: Dona Fern Hershberger Zook (deceased). Parents: E. T. A. and Katie Ann Mast Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Lowell, Dorcas Miller; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 15 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

Classified advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time placement is $1 per word, minimum of $25. To place a classified ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has a ***custodial position*** available when the new gym opens in mid-January. Contact Miles Yoder at LMH, 717-299-0436; fax 717-299-0823; email office@lmhs.com.

- **Shalom Christian Academy** (grades K-12, enrollment 400) is seeking an ***elementary/middle school principal***. Send resume to Conrad Swartzentruber, 126 Social Island Road, Chambersburg, PA 17201; 717-375-2223.

- **Eastern Mennonite University: *Women's field hockey coach***. Lead NCAA Division III nationally ranked team. If interested, please send a letter of application, resume and three references to William Hawk, academic dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. AAEOE

- **Growing, urban congregation** seeks full-time ***lead pastor*** to begin 9-99. Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church has about 175 active members and attenders. Key responsibilities include working with multiple staff, leadership committees, preaching, counseling and teaching. Strong Anabaptist focus a must.

  Send MLI form to Larry Hauder, PNW Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; email questions to lhauder@compuserve.com.

- **Eastern Mennonite University: *Catalog librarian***. Part-time January-May 1999. Classifies print and nonprint materials. ALA accredited MLS preferred. Possible full-time sabbatical replacement 1999-2000. Send letter of application, vita, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Boyd Reese, director of libraries, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email reesebt@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEOE

- **Kidron Bethel Retirement Community** in North Newton, Kan., is seeking candidates for the ***executive director*** position. The facility campus includes a variety of independent living units and a 60-bed nursing center. Seeking person with background and experience in all aspects of long-term care. Please send letter and resume to Search Committee, Kidron Bethel Retirement Services, 3001 Ivy Drive, North Newton, KS 67117.

- **Marion Mennonite Church**, a growing congregation located in the Cumberland Valley two hours from Lancaster, Pa., and Harrisonburg, Va., is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor***. Areas of ministry include youth/young adults, music/worship and cell group oversight.

  Request more information or send resume to Joyce Lehman, Marion Mennonite Church, 4365 Molly Pitcher Hwy., Chambersburg, PA 17201; 717-375-4309.

- **Desire for God: *Exploring Spiritual Direction*** will be held March 12-14, 1999, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. The retreat is designed to provide an introduction to spiritual direction for those who would like to understand it better, and to provide assistance with the discernment process for those testing a personal call to spiritual guidance ministry. Leaders: Marlene Kropf, Marcus Smucker, Joan Yoder Miller. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for registration information.

- ***Opportunities for service!*** **Eastern Mennonite Missions** has opportunities for people from youth to retirees to serve overseas in ministries that include teaching, leadership development, church planting and community development, for one or more years. A few of our current needs include leadership development among the Maasai in Kenya, and teachers for missionary children in Asia.

  If God is nudging you to find out more, please call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Mennonite Board of Missions** seeks candidates for ***director of Mennonite Media***, Harrisonburg, Va. Person needed to provide visionary and administrative leadership in prophetic witness to society and the church via public media. Qualifications include passion for media's role in God's reconciling mission to the world; understanding of Mennonite denominational structures; commitment to Mennonite/Anabaptist belief and practice; proven abilities in leadership; education in communication, marketing or business preferred; experience in communication management helpful; abilities in networking, collaboration and work team models needed; proven computer skills.

  Please contact Rachel L. Stoltzfus at 219-294-7523; email Rachells@MBM.org; or write to MBM, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing care retirement community affiliated with Franconia Conference, seeks a ***CEO***. The facility consists of 227 independent living units, 90 skilled nursing beds and 36 assisted living beds. Candidates must have the equivalent of a master's degree and five years experience in health care administration. Must be skilled in public relations, human resources and financial matters as well as overseeing operations based on established policies, including federal, state and local regulations. Must have demonstrated major leadership skills by facilitating and leading strategic direction setting in cooperation with a board of directors. Must be able to articulate and demonstrate commitment to the philosophy, values, mission and vision of the organization. Essential skills include current and future site and program development, management team building and supervision, and technology systems integration. A valid Pennsylvania nursing home administrator license is an asset. Must be a member of a Mennonite church.

  Interested candidates shall submit a confidential resume by Feb. 15, 1999, to Stan Alderfer, chair of the search committee, 144 Telford Pike, Telford, PA 18969.

- **Goshen College**, a four-year liberal arts institution, is seeking a full-time, tenure-track faculty member to provide visionary leadership and to teach courses in ***electronic media production, reporting, journalism, editing, public relations***, and to teach additional courses as appropriate to the department's needs and the candidate's areas of expertise. Master's degree in communication, journalism or broadcasting (or closely related area), and candidates with the doctorate or ABD are highly desirable. Teaching experience required and additional experience as a professional communicator preferred.

  To apply, send a letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of reference to Dr. Paul Keim, academic dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. Interviews will begin after Feb. 15, 1999, and continue until the position is filled. Faculty responsibilities begin Aug. 15, 1999. Women and members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

- **Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada** seeks applications and nominations for three staff positions for summer 1999. Basic qualifications: seminary graduate, ordained, broad church experience, familiarity with MCEC, rooted in Anabaptist-Mennonite faith.

  1. Minister to conference. Qualifications: demonstrated spiritual and team leadership; ability to assess and delegate, listen with compassion and wisdom; demonstrated administrative efficiency and ability to nurture a vision; a sense of humor.

  Responsibilities: designated leader of the ministry team; preaching/teaching in the congregations; liaison between executive board and congregations, executive board and staff; oversee supportive ministries to congregations.

  2. Minister of pastoral services. Qualifications: significant pastoral experience in a Mennonite setting; high level of communication and relational skills.

  Responsibilities: provide guidance to pastors on issues of vocational concern; relate to congregations on pastoral leadership issues; facilitate the work of the MCEC Leadership Commission.

  3. Minister of missions. Qualifications: significant pastoral, mission-related or church planting experience; positive cross-cultural experience.

  Responsibilities: serving as a resource for the commission and congregations in mission initiatives; guiding church planting and service ministries; promoting a vision for mission in MCEC.

  Job descriptions available from the moderator. Submit inquiries, applications or nominations by Jan. 31, 1999, to John H. Cornies, MCEC moderator, 26 Lynden Ave., Dundas, ON L9H 4J9; 905-627-4482.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, an accredited K-8 school located in Lancaster, Pa., has an opening for an ***administrator***. Applications are welcomed from qualified individuals who have a commitment to Anabaptist values and Christian education. Contact Gary Yoder, 1028 Frances Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601; 717-394-5239 (evening); 717-581-6100 ext.128 (daytime); email BY10282aol.com.

by Rich Preheim

Out of Africa

African issues highlighted the World Council of Churches' (WCC) eighth assembly Dec. 3-14. Of course, that probably was inevitable, since the event was held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

WCC delegates adopted a statement calling for the continent's churches to work together and for WCC members elsewhere to play "whatever part they can in the process of reconstruction and reconciliation within Africa." But while many assembly participants applauded the growth of Christianity in Africa, a theologian from Malawi questioned its depth. "This might be the reason it is easily overcome by forces of ethnicity, patriarchy, corruption, hatred, political manipulation, racism, classism, regionalism and traditionalism," Augustine Musopole told an assembly audience.

According to WCC news releases, the assembly also took action to oppose continued violence in southern Sudan, addressed land rights issues, hosted a surprise visit by South African president Nelson Mandela and welcomed six African churches into WCC membership. The organization now has 339 member churches, representing half a billion Christians around the globe. Only three Mennonite churches—in northern Germany, the Netherlands and Congo—are WCC members.

WCC assemblies are held every seven years. The Harare gathering, which celebrated WCC's 50th anniversary, drew more than 5,000 people.

Going buggy in 1999

As the new year brings closer concerns about the dreaded Y2K bug, InterVarsity is moving farther away.

InterVarsity, an interdenominational campus ministry with some 30,000 members on more than 500 U.S. campuses, was to hold its popular student mission convention in Urbana, Ill., in December 1999. But possible effects of 2000's arrival on world computers gave InterVarsity the jitters. So the convention has been postponed until December 2000.

"We felt that it would be irresponsible to simply gloss over potential implications of the Y2K issue," convention spokesperson Melody Hanson tells *Christian Week*.

Not that InterVarsity's change in plans will matter much, believes another newspaper. *Christian Media* calls Y2K a New World Order "prophetic red herring, for the devastation that large numbers of citizenry are expecting in association with the digital malady will actually come much sooner than most expect."

This is from the same folks who last summer predicted the beginning of the "biblical period known as the Indignation," complete with the destruction of New York City and the death of United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan, all by July 4, 1998.

Throwing hunger for a loss

While a new calendar year generates fear of the future for some, for others it generates anticipation of January's post-holidays shining star: the Super Bowl. In conjunction with the professional football championship game on Jan. 31, organizers are planning the ninth annual "Souper Bowl" to benefit hungry people.

The game plan is simple: As worshipers leave church on Super Bowl Sunday, they contribute money—$1 is suggested—or a can of food. The contributions are then distributed to the charity of the congregation's choice. During last year's Souper Bowl, $1.7 million was raised by 8,600 congregations from a variety of denominations in all 50 states plus Canada.

According to "Souper Bowl" letterhead, supporters include former First Lady and Southern Baptist Rosalynn Carter, Atlanta Falcons football coach and Presbyterian Dan Reeves, former football player and Baptist Sterling Sharpe, and Donella Clemens, who never played professional football but was the first woman to be moderator of the Mennonite Church.

As hard as Chinese math

What to make of religion in China? *MCC Peace Office Newsletter* isn't quite sure either. It recently offered these diametrically opposed perspectives. Richard Madsen, an expert on Chinese religion at the University of California at San Diego, claims, "The situation for religion is in many ways the best it's been since 1949." But Paul Marshall of the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto says: "I've met with people from 17 provinces in the last 12 months. They said they are suffering the worst crackdown since the 1980s."

Perception is reality

From *The Wesleyan Advocate* comes this insight on self-perceptions: Seventy-nine percent of Protestant pastors in a recent survey described their congregations as evangelical while only 20 percent of churchgoing adults called themselves that. Thirteen percent of pastors said their congregations were theologically liberal, but 42 percent of adults said they personally were.

Tidbits

- Every year, 3,500 U.S. congregations close their doors for good, while 1,200 are planted. —*Evangelical Visitor*
- Only 5 percent to 10 percent of Christians use Christian bookstores. —*Missionary Messenger*
- Soccer was introduced to Iran by an American Presbyterian missionary nearly a century ago. —*Presbyterian Record*
- In most congregations, 20 percent of the people do 50 percent to 80 percent of the giving. And nearly half of the people give nothing at all.—*Chicago Tribune*
- The Oberammergau Passion play dates back at least 356 years. —*Exploration*

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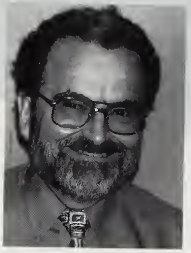
The footnote for 2 Timothy 1:12b



J. Lorne Peachey

1999 will be a difficult year. There's enough leftover business from 1998 to make it so.

Take our nation, for example. We in the United States are living in history-making days. For only the second time since this country began has its President been impeached. In 1868 Andrew Jackson was acquitted when the Senate failed to achieve a two-third's majority to convict. Regardless of the outcome this time, the years since 1868 have given lawmakers plenty of time to work out all sorts of legal maneuvers.

Legalities will also be a concern for Mennonites in 1999. Although hopefully not as acrimonious as for the U.S. government, those working at integration need to find a way to change current legal entities of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) to merge them into something new. How that should be done could well add to what our review of Mennonite church news for 1998 in the last issue called the "rocky road" of integration. With the question of membership in the new denomination—an issue more and more are saying could scuttle the whole merger—the outlook for the Mennonite church in a new year is cloudy at best.

What a messsage of freedom and hope for a new year. Out of whatever muddle or mess we might make of it, God will guard the gifts we have been given, bringing forth new life.

Surveying what is going on in both country and church, who hasn't been tempted on occasion to walk away from it all and just concentrate on one's own personal walk with God? Yet even here the record is not always all that good. At least for me, far too often in 1998 I could echo these words from the apostle Paul: "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Romans 7:19). And, like Paul, I ask: "Who can rescue us?"

For me, one answer came during a recent Sunday morning worship service as I listened to my pastor preach a sermon from 2 Timothy 1. It began familiarly enough with a reminder that God will "guard ... what I have entrusted to him" (2 Timothy 1:12b). But then Conrad Mast called attention to something I had never seen before—the footnote for 2 Timothy 1:12b as recorded in the NRSV; it gives this alternate reading: God will guard "what has been entrusted to me."

There it was—my "rescue." I have been given the gift of the gospel: to preach it, to live it out in the best way I know how. God will guard this gift. I do not need to fear making mistakes or taking the wrong road. Rather, I can give being a Christian my best shot, knowing God will honor what results.

What is true for me is true for the church. God has given many gifts to Mennonites. Joan L. Hockman outlines some of these in her article on page 6: love, service, global awareness, peace and justice, community.

During the past decade, GCs and MCs have decided that we can do a better job living out these gifts by bringing our two groups together. But now that the difficult work of merging is upon us, we sometimes wonder why. Can we maintain our gifts, our identities, our mission? Or will the difficulties of integration belie the words we so glibly speak about unity?

If the footnote for 2 Timothy 1:12b is correct (I've since found four other translations of the Bible with this same footnote while at least two others translate the verse this way), these questions are worries we can give up. God will guard the gifts given to us, be they making peace, bringing reconciliation or acting as agents of healing and hope for our world. God will make sure we don't spoil what has been given us by our feeble, human attempts to be disciples—attempts we can be sure will fall far short of what they should be.

What a message of freedom and hope as we go into a new year—both for individuals and for the church. We are free to act, to try new things, to experiment with what God would have us be. Out of whatever muddle or mess we might make of it, God will guard the gifts we have been given, bringing forth new life. Together we can be a light to our world—a world that will surely know only more confusion and anxiety in the months ahead.

God will guard what has been given to us. The footnote for 2 Timothy 1:12b tells me so.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

January 12, 1999

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Mennonite women lead the way

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8 $1.2 million for Russia, Ukraine
9 The school with no nickname
16 'The whole assembly kept silence'

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The state of forgiveness

It appears that we still don't understand much about the nature of forgiveness. The last several weeks in Washington have included events surrounding the impeachment process that dramatically illustrate this. Perhaps the most informative was the abrupt resignation of House Speaker-elect Bob Livingston. One must respect the honor and integrity that apparently lie behind his decision, but at the same time one must deplore the ethical confusion it demonstrates. Livingston said he would resign following his public acknowledgment of a series of extramarital affairs. This, of course, is similar to the background from which the impeachment charges against the president spring.

If having an extramarital affair was truly a disqualification for congressional service, then integrity would have demanded Livingston's resignation at the time it was occurring, not now because the public finally knows it. It seems to me that Christianity is concerned with the reality of each person's thoughts and actions rather than who knows about them or what is being said about them.

One hopes that the Republicans may finally realize that sacrificing their own leadership because they are demonstrably frail and sinning human beings doesn't make sense. In a similar manner, it does not make sense to demand the president's ouster because of his misguided attempts to protect himself from a similar assault. Qualification for public office does not rest on sainthood even though many of us might wish that it were so. Perhaps we all need to practice more forgiveness in order to recall that it is God who sits in judgment, not we.—*Barry Hieb, Tucson, Ariz.*

The illusion of certainty

I wonder how our personal soul searches for truth affect our processes of becoming an accepting community. Issues, such as allowing people with a homosexual orientation to be church members, become so hot because of what we dearly hold to be the Truth. We have some hints on how to be seekers of Truth: from stories, biblical and otherwise; through creative acts; our life experiences; and immersing ourselves in others' life narratives, especially those who have no voice, who are oppressed, on the outside. Then we must have the courage to allow ourselves to be changed by it all.

If we have all the answers, then we essentially have no need of what our neighbor has to offer. For with certainty and answers, and the need to protect and control them, we miss out on retaining a sense of wonder. There's no reason, then, for poetry or song or dance or painting. Or faith. Or need for neighbors. Abundant life would be no more. How tragic.

To let go of the illusion of certainty—have we the guts to do this? Do we want to be healed, take up our mats and walk (and while we're at it, walk in another's shoes for awhile)? Or do we prefer the familiarity of staying down on our mats? Perhaps there is something to be said for letting go our need for certainty in order to be healed and to be set free.—*Gwen M. Stamm, Scottdale, Pa.*

Divorce's deep grief

As a member of Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship who was present at the Southeast Conference meeting on Dec. 5, I would like to comment on your coverage of that event ("Southeast Conference Disciplinary Action Maintains Warm Relations with Congregation," Dec. 15). The article fairly described the value of the process —one in which relationships were (perhaps miraculously) preserved and even strengthened. The facilitators did a marvelous job of assuring that folks on all sides felt heard and of reminding us that we were indeed on sacred ground.

But the article failed to portray the deep sense of grief that accompanied the severing of our congregation from its conference and its sister congregations. Many tears were shed—and are still being shed—over this profound loss. One facilitator described the parting as a divorce, and that is very much how it feels to me to have been ripped out of my family, the larger Mennonite Church.—*Becky Kurtz, Atlanta*

Not the last word

In identifying psychiatrist Charles Socarides as defending the line against liberal views of sexual orientation (Readers Say, Dec. 15), one might point out that Socarides holds that same-sex orientation represents a profound psychopathology largely correlated with massive early childhood fears associated with dysfunctional parenting. Thus one must ask whether we really want to tag the parents of our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers as having been severely dysfunctional. In any case, I hope people who accept Socarides' views are also familiar with the research of Evelyn Hooker, Judd Marmor, Anne Perkins, Richard Isay, Richard Pillard, Martin Seligman and others. By no means can Socarides be taken to be the last

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readers say

word on the origins of human sexuality, and I wonder how he would explain the origin of the sexual orientation of his gay son, Richard.

Contrary to the views of Socarides, in my judgment, biology has a powerful role in the development of human sexuality and sexual orientation. It would be a terrible state of affairs if our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers and their families continue to be destroyed by our lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Furthermore, the continued stigmatization of our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers and their families is an evil which has no place in the kingdom of God (Galatians 3:28).—*Carl S. Keener, State College, Pa.*

Following directions

When things go wrong, we make choices so fast we don't stop to realize we make choices in direct rebellion to God-given direction. The Spirit of God has to work with us until it gets us to want to live by that God-given direction, "those great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). We will be freed from rebellious attitudes because they no longer have first place influencing our choices. It's beyond our understanding what divine influences will achieve when we are open to them. —*Willard Becker, Freeman, S.D.*

Lack of youthful vigor

As we end 1998, it seems fitting to reflect on the new *The Mennonite.* We were acquainted with both its predecessors and wonder why the current magazine seems to have lost so much of the vigor both its parents had. The new magazine lacks human interest material. We hope that your initial evaluations will lead to helpful changes.—*Lorne and Katherine Buhr, Edmonton*

Cover photo
by Carolyn Prieb

Correction: In the article "Who Are These Guys ..." (Dec. 29, 1998, page 6), two errors occurred. Jim Schrag has three daughters, not two (one is a student, two are teachers), and George Stoltzfus has a daughter in Bangladesh and a son in New Mexico. We apologize for these errors.

Women lea

by Rich Preheim

Mary Ellen Kauffman knows integration. It's about talking and praying and being willing to give up something for the sake of the process. And Mary Ellen has given up a bit.

She was treasurer of the Women's Missionary and Service Commission, the women's organization of the Mennonite Church (MC). Mary Ellen, a tax preparer and accountant in Exeland, Wis., enjoyed being responsible for WMSC's financial books, crunching the group's numbers. "That's the type of thing I like to do," she says.

But as WMSC merged with its General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) counterpart, Women in Mission (WM), the bookkeeping and the number crunching were transferred to paid staff, leaving the treasurer's position virtually a figurehead, Mary Ellen felt. She questioned her continued involvement on the board and considered stepping down.

We very much focused on the commonality we had, the desire to do the mission of the church, the desire to educate women, to resource women.—*Elizabeth Klassen*

Today Mary Ellen is still treasurer, though of Mennonite Women, the 17-month-old integrated women's organization. She now realizes her experience of loss and compromise has been and will be a common one as the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church continue their merger process. "Other people were losing out in this situation, too, so that made me not feel quite so selfish," Mary Ellen says.

Mennonite Women

The vine that is Christ is the featured element in the new symbol of Mennonite Women, designed by Judith Rempel Smucker of Akron, Pa., who also serves as design consultant for *The Mennonite*.

Elizabeth Klassen of Kitchener, Ont., knows integration. It's talking and praying and working to comprehend the positions and passions of others in the process. And Elizabeth has had to comprehend a bit.

One of the challenges in the creation of Mennonite Women was the place of racial/ethnic groups at the board table. WMSC, like the MC General Board, provided seats for representatives from the MC African-American, Hispanic and Native American organizations. WM, like the GC General Board, did not. The latter was the way Klassen was used to.

"I had to understand the whole way [racial/ethnic groups] related to the MC," says Elizabeth, the last WM president.

Today the Mennonite Women board includes seats for African-American, Hispanic and Native American representatives.

Mennonite Women is the first group to become integrated as a result of the GC and MC delegates' 1995 vote in favor of church merger. In fact, WMSC and WM made their decision the same day as their churches' decision. At the Wichita, Kan., convention, after delegates had approved integration, a women's integration task force was created the same day with almost no reservation expressed by WMSC and WM members. After all, why wait? "It seemed there was no good reason to put off looking at [integration]," says Joy Hess, Goshen, Ind., the first president of Mennonite Women.

Says Susan Jantzen, Newton, Kan., one of Mennonite Women's two executive coordinators, "There are more important things to do than spend time on the business aspects of integration."

Barely two years later, in August 1997, Mennonite Women was born. The keys to the process, says Lara Hall Blosser, Scottdale, Pa., the other executive coordinator, was "to dialogue about it, to pray about it."

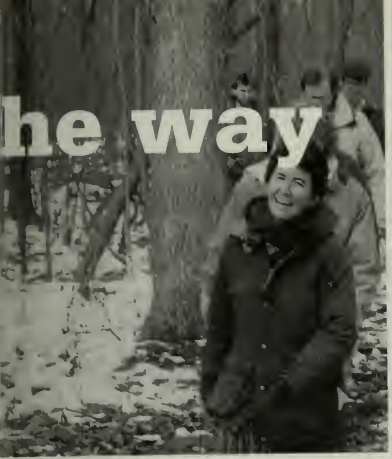
"Sounds simple, doesn't it?" she says.

Maybe. One advantage WMSC and WM had coming into the merger process was similar visions for women in the church. They had even issued a joint Bible study for eight years. "We very much focused on the commonality we had, the desire to do the mission of the church, the desire to educate women, to resource women," Elizabeth says.

But while creating an integrated women's organization was certainly less complex than creating an entire church, it was not without some rough going. One of the roughest times came Oct. 18-19, 1996, at Markham, Ill. It was the first joint meeting of the WMSC and WM boards, and it got bogged down over the issue of composition of the new board. WMSC had a 12-member board, including representation from the racial/ethnic groups; WM had a leaner structure: a four-member executive committee plus an advisory council with representatives from every U.S. district conference and Canadian provincial conference. Finding a model acceptable to all was difficult.

"I think we had to do a lot of listening," Elizabeth recalls. "There were times there were a lot of tensions [over] what was important to various people. We didn't know each other, and we were going into some very new territory."

After struggling for awhile at Markham, a



time-out was called. Business was set aside, and assumptions, concerns and hesitations were laid out on the table, followed by prayer. "There was a lot of honesty that had to be plunked down," Elizabeth says.

The discussion on board composition was then halted for the evening. "A lot of people didn't sleep well, a lot people prayed that night," Lara says. "We came back … and ended up with a board we feel good about."

The Mennonite Women board now has 12 seats, including one from each of four regions (U.S. East, Central and West plus Canada); African-American, Hispanic and Native American organizations; publications committee and officers. "It was better to go bigger and make sure we were being inclusive," Elizabeth says.

Inclusiveness, making room for diversity, was important to Joy. "I think Jesus was very inclusive," she says, "and I want to make room for people whose opinions are different from mine."

Despite the difficulties, the push for merger continued. While some members wondered about how fast they were moving, Lara says there was recognition that "any question we had was not going to go away." They might as well deal with the issues immediately rather than later.

As they continued to work at the nuts and bolts of structure and organization, the women developed trust with each other, which in turn fueled their integration process. "We had come close enough to hear each other, to hurt each other and to realize that we care about each other," Susan says.

"The deep satisfaction of working together across all sorts of boundaries is significant and gets us back to the work of the church." Above all, Susan says, was "a matter of spiritually trusting that God will lead you straight through the hardest conversations."

Says Joy, "I saw the caliber of the women included; I trusted their relationship to Christ; I felt they were working to be understood."

One element in the successful creation of Mennonite Women may be the fact that it was done by women. "There was a sense, not of a women's agenda, but certainly the women's style of doing things," Elizabeth says. Women operate more on feeling, she says, "more expressive of their apprehensions as well as their joys." They are more task oriented: "We want to get it done," Mary Ellen says. And Joy says women are adept listeners. "In some ways women are not unaccustomed to this," she says. "We've been doing this all our lives."

Now nearly a year and a half after Mennonite Women's inception, there is still much to do, such as developing governance structures, job descriptions for board members and a policy manual. But the foundation has been laid. "We are at least where I had dreamt—and beyond," Lara says.

The changes to WMSC and WM do not have to affect the way members in the congregations serve. But Mennonite Women organizers are also looking at new ways to minister to women around the world. An International Women's Fund has been created to help in leadership development for women around the world. A retreat on storytelling is being planned for this spring. There are hopes for workshops on a variety of subjects.

"We have found a new sisterhood, a new circle of friends that cuts across borders, Canadian and U.S., and certain issues," Susan says. "Our friendship is characterized by believing Christ can guide us through."

I think Jesus was very inclusive, and I want to make room for people whose opinions are different from mine.—*Joy Hess*

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite.

Unlike its predecessors, *Timbrel*, the magazine of the integrated Mennonite Women, must support itself by way of subscription. And it's off to a good start. At the latest tally, the bimonthly publication had 8,472 subscribers, which editor Cathleen Hockman-Wert calls a "respectable" number. The *WMSC Voice* and *Window to Mission*, *Timbrel*'s forerunners, were at least partially subsidized by their sponsoring organizations, Women's Missionary and Service Commission (Mennonite Church) and Women in Mission (General Conference Mennonite Church).

"It's crucial that *Timbrel* be self-supporting," says Cathleen. "If we can maintain the current subscription level through 1999, we'll have met that goal."

She conducted a reader survey early on to help her chart *Timbrel*'s course. "Judging from the 400-plus surveys returned last spring, there is widespread hunger among women to hear each other's stories, [to build] each other up as we continue our spiritual journeys and strive to meet the needs around us," she says.

"*Timbrel* has worked out to be a good representation of who we are," says Lara Hall Blosser, Mennonite Women executive co-coordinator. "It reflects our diversity, and in its attempt to look at the roles of women it tries to respect the past, affirm the present and look toward the future."

"It reflects a larger vision that Mennonite Women has to create a place where we can see who we are as women," adds executive co-coordinator Susan Jantzen. "We reflect a wide spectrum of theology and faith practice."

Cathleen adds, "My hope is that *Timbrel* can serve not only those women who are members of congregational women's groups but also those who have not been in touch with Mennonite Women or its predecessors."—*Melanie Zuercher of General Conference Mennonite Church News Service*

Matthew 28:18-20 helped one pastor overcome his resistance to evangelism.

Jesus said to mak

by Larry Augsburger

I have a confession to make. I am a pastor, but for years I was uncomfortable with evangelism. I know that doesn't sound pastoral, but like numerous others of my generation, I spent many years incapable of distinguishing between evangelism and the revivalism in which it came wrapped. Myriad verses of "Just As I Am," services every night for two weeks and guilt that wouldn't go away, despite the fact that I had already made my decision for Christ, left me with a distaste for evangelism. So it should be no surprise that the Great Commission was not my favorite passage of Scripture.

Jesus says in Matthew 28:18-20: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." For years I avoided coming to grips with this passage. It was OK as the foundation for a missionary mandate—for sending missionaries to India and Africa—but I resented what it had to say about my need to be involved in guilt-producing, two-week-long revival services or witnessing on the streets.

I found a beautiful text from the lips of Jesus, a text that more than any other in the New Testament shows Jesus' expectation for his church.

When I got to seminary I never ventured into any of the classes on evangelism, church growth or church planting. It's embarrassing to reflect on it now, but even though I was going to be a pastor, I was not going to do evangelism. I expected I would carefully shepherd those the Lord already had in my congregation. I would welcome any who accidentally happened by, but I would avoid evangelism. For the first while I had to live with my congregations' expectations that we would have semiannual or annual revival services. I found it hard to meet those expectations, but at least I went through the motions. However, badly slipping attendance soon doomed those efforts, and I was freed from the demands of meeting evangelistic notions.

The church growth movement: By then something new was stirring in me. I was discovering that the revivalism I found so difficult was but one expression of evangelism. I was discovering that many people out there desperately needed the good news and that there were methods other than revivalism for reaching them. I discovered the church growth movement.

I will be the first to acknowledge that this movement, like revivalism, is but one way to wrap evangelism, but it was a wrapper with which I felt more comfortable. I gained the highest degree of comfort in a three-day church leaders conference at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill. This 20-year-old congregation, which began in a movie theater and now routinely hosts close to 16,000 people in its contemporary evangelistic services each weekend (it has worship services for its committed members on Wednesday and Thursday evenings), is considered the nation's leader in providing seeker-sensitive services.

Opponents of this form of church often accuse its proponents of being concerned only with numbers, but at the conference I was impressed by Willow Creek's lead pastor, Bill Hybels, who talked about how the congregation didn't set out to be big but to be faithful. He outlined the congregation's program to move unchurched people to full Christian discipleship, beginning with befriending them in their indifference or agnosticism and moving them through conversion to discipleship and full Christian maturity.

Hearing that talk and witnessing the unabashed salvation and discipleship content of the sermons and program convinced me I had found a concept of evangelism with which I could feel comfortable. Suddenly I found

disciples

myself drawn to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). I found a beautiful text from the lips of Jesus, a text that more than any other in the New Testament shows Jesus' expectation for his church.

Three layers of meaning: I have found in this text three layers of meaning. The first level lies in putting the emphasis on the "go" and the "all nations." When we put the emphasis here, we see the text as largely or only a missionary passage. It's true that going to other nations is a part of the meaning, but it is not all of it.

The second layer of meaning—which I think we Mennonites were discovering in the '60s and '70s as we lost our insularity—lies in the realization that it's not only those in the nations "out there" who need the good news but also people right around here. The "all nations" includes our nation, and those who are to "go" include us. This passage is not just for professional, board-supported missionaries but also for average Christians in North America. We can be winning our friends and neighbors to the kingdom.

The third level of meaning is the one Bill Hybels led me into, that the task of evangelization (and the Christian nurturing of ourselves and our children) is not done until one has led the person into mature Christianity. The Great Commission is not about missions or evangelism. It is about making disciples. Missionaries have always understood this disciple-making mandate as they have worked to lead converts into full maturity, but I'm not so sure that meaning survived the transition from mission into evangelism. Many churches—both in the past and in the present—tend to be minimalistic when it comes to training in discipleship.

Once a person has been evangelized at a revival meeting or even in a newer, more seeker-sensitive setting, the expectation has been that the person will quickly become like one of us pretty much on his or her own. Saving the soul was considered enough, and not enough attention was given to the "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" portion of the text.

Do we have any structures in place for newcomers to the church other than worship services and Sunday school classes that are often aimed far more at people well established in the faith?

What are we doing to make disciples? Do we have any structures in place for newcomers to the church other than worship services and Sunday school classes that are often aimed far more at people well established in the faith? Do we have any disciple-making nurseries for 35-year-olds who were never in a church or Sunday school class before they were drawn into our fellowship?

This text leads me to the inescapable conclusion that today's church has a long way to go to fulfill the mandate of the Great Commission. We must begin working harder on making disciples. I suggest we start in our own churches, making a significant effort to raise the level of spirituality and Christian commitment of those who sit in our pews Sunday after Sunday, finding ways to make the Scripture take deeper root in the hearts of our children and creating disciple-making nurseries for those newly drawn into the fellowship. Then we may do a better job of "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Larry Augsburger is pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

We've asked various people throughout the Mennonite world, What changes have you made in your life in the last two years because of your involvement with God's Word? Their replies will appear approximately every other week in *The Mennonite* for several months in this series called Transformations.
—*Editors*

Mennonite Central Committee worker Corrina Kroeker teaches English to abandoned children who have found a home at the Good Shepherd Shelter in Makeevka, Ukraine. The shelter is one of the recipients of MCC winter assistance.

MCC photo by Mark Beach

MCC warms Russian, Ukrainian winter

$1.2 million worth of aid bound for 'discouraged' people

AKRON, Pa.—As poor potato and grain crops, harsh temperatures and falling currency add up to another difficult winter for people in Russia, Mennonite Central Committee is responding with increased relief efforts in the region. In the tradition of its early years, MCC over the next two months will send warm clothing, bedding, soap and food—a total of 200 metric tons—to Russia.

In addition to the nine 40-foot containers bound for Russia, MCC will also send six shipments to the Ukraine in 1999. The total value of the 15 shipments is estimated at $1.2 million. MCC was organized in 1920 as a way for North American Mennonites to provide food for famine victims in Russia and Ukraine.

"This isn't an emergency situation like Hurricane Mitch," says Steve Hochstetler Shirk, who with his wife, Cheryl, directs MCC's work in the former Soviet Union. "However, year after year, life is increasingly difficult for people, and many are becoming discouraged and depressed."

The Shirks in October contacted church and mission groups across Russia to ask if they anticipated needing additional material resources. Several of them welcomed the chance to expand ministry in their areas, although none saw the situation in the critical terms described in Western media reports. Some groups expressly declined an offer of humanitarian assistance this winter, saying that the needs do not justify the difficulty and expense to clear humanitarian shipments through customs.

As a result of the Shirks' survey, MCC aid will go to church groups of various denominations and to locations stretching from north of Moscow to Siberia, where temperatures dive to minus 58 degrees Fahrenheit, to Vladivostok on the Pacific coast.

"We start with the family of faith, but we don't stop there," Shirk says. "We also want MCC aid to help local Christians show care and compassion for others in their communities. We want the aid to be a channel for ministry."

Among the recipients of MCC aid will be poor families in Orenburg, Russia, formerly home to many Mennonites who have immigrated to other countries, primarily Germany.

Some of those immigrants, called Aussiedler, have formed the Bielefeld Mennonite Church in Germany, which has a mission to assist people in the Orenburg area. Two MCC shipments of warm clothing, soap and bedding will help the program expand to additional villages.

Through Bielefeld mission efforts, 10 congregations have been started in the Orenburg area. Leaders are now working to register them as Mennonite churches.

MCC will also provide canned meat to Aquila, another Aussiedler mission organization in Germany, for shipment to communities in southern Siberia and northern Kazakhstan.

Other partner organizations in Russia and Ukraine receiving MCC assistance include Pentecostal churches, the Union of Evangelical Christian/Baptist Churches in Zaparozhye and a Christian university.—*MCC News Service*

CPT rings out against violent toys

Fifty members and supporters of Christian Peacemaker Teams rang out the violence of the past and rang in hopes for a peaceful new year in a Jan. 1 demonstration at a Chicago Toys R Us store.

Inside the store, nine demonstrators conducted a mock funeral procession through the aisles of action figures and video games to highlight the connection between violent toys and violent acts, such as the spate of school shootings across the United States in 1998. Security personnel ushered the group out of the store after about 10 minutes.

Outside, the demonstrators rang bells, sang songs and held a memorial service for victims of child violence. "In each of six school shootings that claimed the lives of 20 people and injured many more, kids killed kids under the influence of violent toys," said participant Gary Brooks.—*CPT News Service*

And their nicknames shall be . . .

Appropriate athletic identity can be challenge for schools

As Iowa Mennonite School has made a name for itself athletically in recent years, observers have noticed something: IMS doesn't have is a name—a nickname, to be more precise.

The Mennonite high school near Kalona has never been able to decide what to call its athletic teams. So they don't have a nickname.

All the other Mennonite high schools and colleges do. Their athletic identities range from people (Western Mennonite School Pioneers) to animals (Freeman Academy Bobcats, Hesston Larks) to plants (Goshen College Maple Leafs), from the broadly religious (Eastern Mennonite High School Flames, Central Christian High School Crusaders) to Mennonite heritage (Bethel College Threshers). (See sidebar, right.)

But in Iowa, sometimes people just refer to IMS as "the school without a nickname," says Dwight Gingerich, coach of the school's boys' varsity basketball and girls' varsity volleyball teams. The chant "I-M-S" rings out at games. Newspaper writers refer to the school as "Iowa Mennonite," "IMS" or "maroon and white."

"[Not having a nickname] doesn't seem to be a real problem," says Gingerich, who was an IMS freshman in 1972-73, when the athletic program started. "It makes it a little bit difficult for the media since they like to use them."

And the media have had more occasion in recent years to report on IMS athletics. The boys' basketball team has been in the state tournament five times since 1988, taking home the title 1992. The boys' soccer team has been to the state tournament three times, winning it in 1997. Golf, volleyball and boys' and girls' track and cross country squads have all made appearances in state championship contests.

Before the athletic successes of the past decade, IMS tried to pick a nickname. Options such as Mustangs, Pioneers and Royals were discussed, and votes were taken. But each time a name was singled out, it lost to the option of not having a nickname. A pastor once gave a talk about how a name might represent the school's identity.

Some team nicknames are obvious. The early pioneers pushed to Oregon, where Western is located. But eastern Pennsylvania isn't known for pioneers' presence. Still, teams at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School in Lansdale are also known as the Pioneers. The nickname relates to the origins of the school more than to a group of people, says athletic director Tim Ehst. "Christopher Dock himself was a pioneer in the whole education realm," he says.

Photo supplied of IMS

An Iowa Mennonite School player slices through the opposing defense during a state tournament game. Unlike other schools, IMS uniforms are never emblazoned with the team's nickname—IMS athletic teams don't have nicknames.

At Bethany Christian School, Goshen, Ind., its mascot got a make-over in 1993 when it was changed from a Brave to a Bruin. "With increased sensitivity, [Braves] was a derogatory kind of word just in terms of Native Americans," says William D. Hooley, who was principal at the time. "It seemed to us not to be appropriate at all."

When Braves was chosen in the 1960s, when the athletic program started, it had a connotation of an upright, righteous person, says Bethany athletic director Dan Bodiker. But its meaning changed over the years. For a new name, Hooley hoped for a more spiritual symbol such as Flames, which is also used by Eastern Mennonite High School and Rockway Mennonite Collegiate.

At Bethany, a commmittee was formed, chapels tackled the issue of a school mascot, and students submitted entries. "We ended up with Bruins," Bodiker says.

Back in Iowa, the processes Bethany used have yet to generate a mascot for IMS. But it could happen someday. Says Gingerich, "It would be interesting to see if we could ever nail down who we are in an athletic sense."

—Marshall V. King

The teams roster

Athletic team nicknames for Mennonite Secondary Education Council members and General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges:

- **Belleville (Pa.) Mennonite School Trojans**
- **Christopher Dock Mennonite School Pioneers, Lansdale, Pa.**
- **Bethany Christian School Bruins, Goshen, Ind.**
- **Bethel College Threshers, North Newton, Kan.**
- **Bluffton (Ohio) College Beavers**
- **Canadian Mennonite Bible College Saints, Winnipeg**
- **Central Christian High School Crusaders, Kidron, Ohio**
- **Eastern Mennonite High School Flames, Harrisonburg, Va.**
- **Eastern Mennonite University Royals, Harrisonburg, Va.**
- **Freeman (S.D.) Academy Bobcats**
- **Goshen (Ind.) College Maple Leafs**
- **Hesston (Kan.) College Larks**
- **Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School Blazers**
- **Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Flames, Kitchener, Ont.**
- **Sarasota (Fla.) Christian High School Flames**
- **United Mennonite Educational Institute Blues, Leamington, Ont.**
- **Western Mennonite School Pioneers, Salem, Ore.**

After combined 64 years in overseas work, ex-MBM workers spend retirement in service

When we retired, I often talked about going back.

—Frieda Erb

ELKHART, Ind.—Delbert and Frieda Erb may need some help defining the word "retired."

The dictionary defines the word as "withdrawn from business or public life." But since retiring two years ago after a combined 64 years in service in Latin America, the Erbs, longtime Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers in Argentina, have been anything but withdrawn.

Following retirement, the Erbs decided to remain in Argentina, their longtime home and the country where many of their children and grandchildren live. Since retiring, they have been involved with a church in their town of Choele Choel, helped with a theological education program and facilitated the formation of a joint outreach ministry between Mennonites in Argentina and Illinois. Now they have gone to Bolivia for a two-year stint with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Frieda (Schellenberg) Erb spent 17 years in Bolivia with MCC before marrying Delbert, an MBM worker in Argentina, in 1982.

"When we retired, I often talked about going back," says Frieda, who also served two years as MBM's Latin America director.

The Erbs on Jan. 1 began their assignment at the MCC center in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, hosting 50 MCC workers, about half from North America and the rest from Bolivia. The Erbs will also work with some of the local churches.

In addition, Frieda will assist with health work on a volunteer basis, and Delbert will be an outside auditor for the financial office there. He has also reserved a quarter of his time to continue facilitating the Argentina-Illinois mission partnership.

About four years ago, the four southern congregations of the Argentine Mennonite Conference began dreaming of a mission project in the Patagonia region in the southern part of the country. Meanwhile, a group of Illinois Mennonites desired involvement with an outreach project. Last March, the Argentine and Illinois Mennonites plus MBM signed an agreement to collaborate on the mission work. *—Gary Kauffman of MBM News Service*

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MBM grants to fund urban congregations

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions has awarded two $5,000 grants to support the development of congregations in Los Angeles and Pittsburgh.

One grant will benefit Los Angeles Faith Chapel, a fast-growing, multicultural congregation in southern Los Angeles. Sunday attendance averages 90 to 100 people, including expatriate West Africans, middle-class African-Americans and a variety of homeless people. Los Angeles Faith Chapel has given birth to a second congregation, Calvary Life Assembly, and is spearheading a mission effort to Nigeria.

Another $5,000 grant will help Allegheny Conference plant two congregations in Pittsburgh, one among among Hispanics and another among a population with roots in India. *—MBM News Service*

Seminary to add development office

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, will get a development office, thanks to a $1.3 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. The funds will provide for the creation of two full-time development positions, an administrative support position and a part-time communication position.

The grant will also support merit-based and need-based scholarships and programs and provide funding so pastors new to Mennonite ministry can participate free in the seminary's annual School for Leadership Training.

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Raising and lifting

Participants worship God during an Eastern Mennonite Missions-sponsored gathering held in November at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church. The event, which drew more than 175 people, was billed as "no agenda beyond worshiping God."

Food is basic human right, MCC Canada says

WINNIPEG—Declaring that access to adequate food is a basic human right, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada has urged the United Nations to provide leadership in ensuring that right for everyone.

"Food is a gift of God to be shared. Action that seeks to make an adequate diet available to all people is a witness to God's love and grace," states a letter approved at MCC Canada's annual meeting in November. The letter was sent to Mary Robinson, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights.*—MCC Canada News Service*

Bluffton peer education program honored

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College's efforts to prevent alcohol abuse and other health and safety issues has generated national recognition. The school's Peer Awareness Leaders (PALS) chapter was one of 12 to be honored as a 1998 Outstanding Network Affiliate by the BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network.

The network is an international association of college- and university-based peer education programs. While the issue of alcohol consumption is the organization's primary focus, chapters can develop other programs of concern and interest.

by the way ...

A survey of Old Order Mennonites in New York found them to not have high levels of cholesterol and not be prone to being overweight even though they ate a diet as high in fats and cholesterol as the rest of the U.S. population.*—Reuters*

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Events

"Refreshing the Winds: A Conference on Worship," Jan. 14-17, Winnipeg. Sponsor: Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Concord College. Contact: Rudy Schellenberg, 204-888-6781, or Bill Baerg, 204-669-6583.

"Hospitality and the Vital Church" workshop, Jan. 16, Goshen, Ind. Sponsor: New Life Ministries. Contact: Ed Bontrager, 757-595-6889, or Marilyn Miller, 303-499-1565.

Pacific Southwest Conference midyear assembly, Feb. 5-6, Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif. Theme: "One Body Through the Cross."

Mennonite Disaster Service all-unit meeting, Feb. 12-13, Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church. Contact: Richard Good, 540-434-4086.

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. annual meeting, Feb. 18, Abbotsford, B.C.

Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting, Feb. 19-20, Abbotsford, B.C.

Northwest Conference annual meeting, Feb. 26-28, Tofield, Alta.

Workers

Freed, John, concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., on Dec. 31.

Greene, William, was ordained Nov. 15, 1998, as pastor of Crossroads Mennonite Church, Timberville, Va.

Grusy, Katherine, Goshen, Ind., has been named to the Bluffton (Ohio) College board of trustees.

King, Douglas, was licensed Nov. 8, as youth and young adult pastor at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Mohr, Roberta, Wadsworth, Ohio, has been named to the Bluffton College board of trustees.

Births

Fellers, Abigail Dawn, Dec. 11, to Adam and Cathy (Oswald) Fellers, Centreville, Mich.

Fox, Sarah Rose, Dec. 15, to Michael and Pam (Martin) Fox, Ephrata, Pa.

Gehman, Bryce Edward, Dec. 1, to Billy and Robin (Keplinger) Gehman, Bergton, Va.

Hershberger, Christopher JohnPaul, Nov. 11, to Steven and Susan (King) Hershberger, Indianapolis.

Leichty, Hunter Matthew, Dec. 13, to Karma (Roth) and Mat Leichty, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Martin, Jessica Rose, Dec. 12, to David and Karen (Ropp) Martin, Drayton, Ont.

Richardson, Josiah Paul, Nov. 24, to Cyndi (Friesen) and Paul Richardson, South San Gabriel, Calif.

Schmidt, Logan Ryan, Dec. 17, to Ryan and Tisha Schmidt, Topeka, Kan.

Shertzer, Todd Dylan, Dec. 18, to Todd and Twila (Fisher) Shertzer, Lancaster, Pa.

Tyson, Stephen Irvin, Nov. 28, to Magan Tyson, Zionsville, Pa.

Unternahrer, Jaren Ralph, Dec. 12, to Desirae (Robertson) and Jason Unternahrer, Wayland, Iowa.

Marriages

Dengler/Gillespie: Jessica Dengler, Souderton, Pa., and Stephen Gillespie, Kennett Square, Pa., Dec. 19.

Eberly/Lehman: Peter Eberly, Kalona, Iowa, and Natalie Lehman, Hollsopple, Pa., Dec. 19 at Stahl Mennonite Church, Johnstown, Pa.

Grubbs/Unruh: Anna Grubbs, Lawrence, Kan., and Austin Unruh, Greensburg, Kan., Dec. 19 at Grace Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Lawrence.

Ramer/Short: Chad Ramer, Goshen, Ind., and Christine Short, Archbold, Ohio, Dec 19 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Deaths

Alderfer, Edith, 97, Souderton, Pa., died Dec 20. Spouse: Alvin Alderfer (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Ella Hackman Landis (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 23 at Souderton.

Crutchfield, Jane, 83, Newport News, Va., died Nov. 28. Survivors: daughter Jane Trotta; three grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 2 at Newport News.

Handwork, Charles, 74, Youngstown, Ohio, died Dec. 8 of heart failure. Spouse: (1st) Eleanor Mack Handwork (deceased); (2nd) Pauline Madden Handwork (deceased). Parents: Charles and Nellie Russell Handwork (deceased). Survivors: children Joan Stanley, Patricia Carach, Mary Broadbent, Carol, James; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

Hughes, Harold, 86, Parkesburg, Pa., died Nov. 2. Spouse: Bertha Lochner Hughes. Other survivors: daughter Grace Salamh; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 5 at Parkesburg Mennonite Church.

Minks, Lena Pauline, 73, Houston, died of complications from surgery and diabetes. Spouse: Hilbert Minks. Parents: Robert Phy and Viola Sylvia Harris Allison Lander (deceased). Survivors: children Sharon Kent, Ronald, David; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Greensburg (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Neuhauser, Tillman, 93, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 23. Spouse: Ethel Mae Holaway Neuhauser. Parents: Amos and Katherine Neuhauser (deceased). Other survivors: Darrel, David, Norma Gresham, Darlene Mellinger; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka, Ill.

Nofziger, Bessie Frey, 95, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 9. Spouse: (1st) Edgar Frey (deceased); (2nd) Lester Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Nicholas and Mary Wyse (deceased). Survivors: children Robert Frey, Frederick Nofziger; five grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Reeser, Lorene Staley, 90, Normal, Ill., died Dec. 4 of heart failure. Spouse: Jake Reeser (deceased). Parents: Ali and Eva Staley (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Donald, Robert, Larry, Patty Burns; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7.

Shirk, Orville, 75, Three Rivers, Mich., died Dec. 15. Survivors: children Bert, Bruce, Orville Jr., Emily Gosnell, Marjorie Brown, Deborah Jones; 25 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17.

Underwood, Timothy Austin, 21, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 13. Parents: Larry and Crystal Underwood. Grandparents: Palmer and Marge Schrag. Other survivors: son Austin; sisters Teresa Miller, Christina; brother Mark. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Vogel, Florence Preheim Stucky, 74, Reedley, Calif., died Dec. 12 in an automobile accident. Survivors: children Doug Stucky, Terry Vogel, Mike Vogel; 15 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

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classifieds

- **Landis Homes** is seeking an ***adult day services manager*** for dementia care. A full-time position for a new facility serving people with dementia. Desire LPN or BSW with two years of experience with older adults in a supervisory capacity and experience or interest in people with memory impairment.

Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **Pluralism and Community: *Conversations on the Calling and Character of Anabaptist-Mennonites for Beginning the 21st Century*** will be held March 24-26, 1999, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. The purpose is to reflect on a vision for the identity, calling and role of the Mennonite Church in our changing world at the doorstep of the 21st century. Presenters: John Lapp, Rodney Clapp, Lydia Neufeld Harder, Bedru Hussein, Gayle Gerber Koontz and others. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for registration information.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is recruiting a ***Ten Thousand Villages regional sales manager*** located in the southwestern U.S. Qualifications include a degree in business/marketing (preferred); experience in retail management; knowledge of Ten Thousand Villages products; good personal, administrative and communication skills; and flexibility in traveling throughout the region. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position.

For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Hope Mennonite Church**, Wichita, Kan., seeks a half-time ***director of ministry development*** to expand its lay ministries by helping the congregation identify where their gifts and their desires for ministries might match; by forming ministry teams around those ideas; and by training and supporting individuals or teams in current and new ministries, with a particular focus on youth-related ministry development. The director is expected to be involved in the congregation, and needs a high energy, self-directed, people-focused, flexible work outlook. The position requires creativity, organization, the ability to work in a team, and a strong commitment to Christian beliefs.

Please contact Search Committee, Hope Mennonite Church, 868 N. Maize Road, Wichita, KS 67212; 316-722-0903; fax 316-722-5173.

- **Mennonite Association of Retired Persons** seeks an ***executive director*** who is committed to helping older people live full, rich lives. The successful candidate must have the skills to manage a membership of 3,600, conduct seminars and workshops on issues concerning aging, publish a quarterly newsletter, work with a board of directors, and direct a distinctive and highly successful program of Service Opportunities for Older Persons (SOOP) in cooperation with Mennonite Board of Missions and MCC Canada. Social Security income may be important for the successful candidate for this four-fifths time position.

Send your resume and inquiries to MARP search committee, Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing care retirement community affiliated with Franconia Conference, seeks a ***CEO***. The facility consists of 227 independent living units, 90 skilled nursing beds and 36 assisted living beds. Candidates must have the equivalent of a master's degree and five years experience in health care administration. Must be skilled in public relations, human resources and financial matters as well as overseeing operations based on established policies, including federal, state and local regulations. Must have demonstrated major leadership skills by facilitating and leading strategic direction setting in cooperation with a board of directors. Must be able to articulate and demonstrate commitment to the philosophy, values, mission and vision of the organization. Essential skills include current and future site and program development, management team building and supervision, and technology systems integration. A valid Pennsylvania nursing home administrator license is an asset. Must be a member of a Mennonite church.

Interested candidates shall submit a confidential resume by Feb. 15, 1999, to Stan Alderfer, chair of the search committee, 144 Telford Pike, Telford, PA 18969.

Summer School

May 24 - June 11
Foundations of New Testament Exposition: Synoptic Gospels
Mary H. Schertz, Ph.D., AMBS

June 1-11
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Marlene Kropf, D.Min., and June Alliman Yoder, D.Min., AMBS
International Politics: Christian Perspectives
John A. Lapp, Ph.D., guest instructor
Spirituality, Pastoral Care and Healing
Marcus G. Smucker, Ph.D.,
Adjunct faculty, AMBS

June 11-18
Church Administration and Leadership
Del Glick, D.Min., guest instructor
Includes weekend Continuing Education event, July 11-12
Pastoral Care for People with Addictions
Brice Balmer, D.Min., guest instructor
Includes weekend Continuing Education event, July 11-12

June 14-25
Apocalyptic and the New Millenium
Walter Klaassen, Ph.D., guest instructor
Liberation and Contextual Theologies
Daniel Schipani, Dr.Psy., Ph.D., AMBS

June 18 - July 5
Spiritual Pilgrimage with Celtic Christians
Marlene Kropf, D.Min., AMBS
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August 11-18
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- **New Danville Mennonite School**, an accredited K-8 school located in Lancaster, Pa., has an opening for an ***administrator***. Applications are welcomed from qualified individuals who have a commitment to Anabaptist values and Christian education. Contact Gary Yoder, 1028 Frances Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601; 717-394-5239 (evening); 717-581-6100 ext.128 (daytime); email BY10282aol.com.

- **Growing, urban congregation** seeks full-time ***lead pastor*** to begin 9-99. Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church has about 175 active members and attenders. Key responsibilities include working with multiple staff, leadership committees, preaching, counseling and teaching. Strong Anabaptist focus a must.

Send MLI form to Larry Hauder, PNW Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; email questions to lhauder@compuserve.com.

classifieds

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting two ***Ten Thousand Villages company store managers*** in Princeton, N.J., and Northampton, Mass. Qualifications include a degree in business administration, marketing and/or experience and training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability; ability to attractively display merchandise and arrange store layout; enjoy meeting the public and dealing with customers; ability to train, schedule and supervise sales clerks; experience in ordering, bookkeeping and inventory maintenance; interest and/or experience in advertising and promotion. These are full-time, two-year salaried positions.

  For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

Concord College
Menno Simons College &
Canadian Mennonite Bible College

have developed **Mennonite College Federation**, a cooperative association of colleges committed to the Biblical faith, and rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition. This partnership will lead to the significant expansion of academic programming. Over a period of several years the three colleges expect to hire a number of faculty in a variety of the social sciences, humanities and other areas.

The three colleges invite applications for the following

faculty positions

scheduled to be filled for September, 1999:

Menno Simons College (MSC):
three positions in *Conflict Resolution Studies* (CRS)
Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) :
one position in *humanities or social sciences*,
one position in *Anabaptist studies/Church History*, and
one position in *organizational leadership and management*
Concord College (CC):
one position in *humanities or social sciences*

Qualifications

- Ph.D. , completed or nearly complete (candidates for the CRS positions will be expected to have done graduate work in that discipline)
- commitment to the Christian faith and mission of the college

Please direct applications or inquiries regarding these positions, or similar positions which will open up in the coming years to the following:

MSC: President; Menno Simons College; 380 Spence St.;
Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9 (204) 786-9895; fax: (204) 783-3699;
e-mail: george.richert@uwinnipeg.ca
CMBC: Dean; CMBC; 600 Shaftesbury Blvd; Winnipeg, MB
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e-mail: dean@confmenno.ca
CC: Dean, Concord College; 169 Riverton Ave.; Winnipeg, MB
R2L 2E5 (204) 669-6583; fax: (204) 663-2468;
e-mail:drdyck@concordcollege.mb.ca

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for five ***Ten Thousand Villages company store assistant managers*** in Bryn Mawr, Pa. (32 hrs/wk), Princeton, N.J. (32 hrs/wk), New Haven, Conn. (32 hrs/wk), New Haven, Conn. (20 hrs/wk) and Northampton, Mass. (32 hrs/wk). Qualifications include experience and/or training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability coupled with good organizational skills; willing and able to learn a variety of tasks under the direction of the manager; enjoy interacting with a wide variety of people and an appreciation for customer service; ability to cover the responsibilities of the manager in his or her absence; support of and commitment to the mission of Ten Thousand Villages. These are two-year salaried positions.

  For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for the ***staff associate for urban peacemaking***—Mennonite Conciliation Services position at MCC U.S., Akron, Pa. Qualifications include a commitment to Christ and his way of peace; training or experience in peace and justice concerns, especially conciliation, organizing, criminal justice, peace education, racism, gender issues; openness to advanced training in these areas; bachelor's degree in related field preferred; strong urban experience; especially with racially and ethnically diverse communities; strong interpersonal skills and ability to relate to a broad spectrum of constituency groups; well-developed writing, public speaking and teaching skills for adult and youth audiences; ability to work independently as well as part of a staff team. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position.

  For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada** seeks applications and nominations for three staff positions for summer 1999. Basic qualifications: seminary graduate, ordained, broad church experience, familiarity with MCEC, rooted in Anabaptist-Mennonite faith.

  1. Minister to conference. Qualifications: demonstrated spiritual and team leadership; ability to assess and delegate, listen with compassion and wisdom; demonstrated administrative efficiency and ability to nurture a vision; a sense of humor.

  Responsibilities: designated leader of the ministry team; preaching/teaching in the congregations; liaison between executive board and congregations, executive board and staff; oversee supportive ministries to congregations.

  2. Minister of pastoral services. Qualifications: significant pastoral experience in a Mennonite setting; high level of communication and relational skills.

  Responsibilities: provide guidance to pastors on issues of vocational concern; relate to congregations on pastoral leadership issues; facilitate the work of the MCEC Leadership Commission.

  3. Minister of missions. Qualifications: significant pastoral, mission-related or church planting experience; positive cross-cultural experience.

  Responsibilities: serving as a resource for the commission and congregations in mission initiatives; guiding church planting and service ministries; promoting a vision for mission in MCEC.

  Job descriptions available from the moderator. Submit inquiries, applications or nominations by Jan. 31, 1999, to John H. Cornies, MCEC moderator, 26 Lynden Ave., Dundas, ON L9H 4J9; 905-627-4482.

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Gordon Houser

'The whole assembly kept silence' (Acts 15:12)

For everything there is a season, …
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.
—Ecclesiastes 3:1,7b

Many of us thought we had come to a prayer meeting, but soon we were all talking. Then a woman said, "Can we pray?" Wise words.

Our congregation was meeting because we faced a decision about whether or not to buy some land around the church's meetinghouse. A deadline approached. In several weeks the organization that owned the land would withdraw their offer and turn the matter over to a real estate agency.

We were not unified. We took time to pray, to listen for what we sensed the Holy Spirit saying to us. We then gave opportunity for each person to say what they thought or felt about the issue. A variety of views came forth.

We use a form of consensus in our congregation's decision making. When everyone had responded, one person was opposed to buying the land, and several consented to the decision without affirming it.

We met two weeks later. During that time our church council encouraged everyone to pray. At the next meeting a curious thing happened. While many of us felt the amount being asked for the land was too high, someone sensed the Spirit saying that we should offer more than was being asked. The Christian organization selling the land was having some financial problems, so why not support them rather than try to get a good deal from them.

While the rest of the church largely has been stuck in the pursuit of integration, with many words spoken and written, the two women's organizations have integrated.

That's what we did. Without that one person hearing a different message, it would not have happened, and we would not have taken another opportunity to pray about it.

The General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, seeking to integrate in some form, face a consultation March 11-14 that some compare to the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.

When I heard this news, I immediately felt a strong urge to be in prayer about it, and I know many others are in prayer. Our magazine is also receiving many ideas about how to solve the impasse the church feels about the question of membership and homosexuality. Curiously, each of these articles on how to solve this problem has come from a man.

In our Sept. 8, 1998, issue, Cathleen Hockman-Wert offered this advice: "I'm not always convinced that the church needs more women to speak up. I tend to think instead that more men should hush up and let us all quietly seek the Spirit's guidance."

Now read the article on page 4 about Mennonite Women. While the rest of the church largely has been stuck in the pursuit of integration, with many words spoken and written, the two women's organizations have integrated. They haven't ignored words, which are necessary, but they have employed much prayer and listening. Can we learn from them?

The Jerusalem Council spent considerable time listening and praying. While our discussions often divide between those who emphasize what Scripture says and those who emphasize people's experience of God working among them, this council paid attention to both. The decision they came to was radical, far-reaching and difficult. The understatement of Acts 15 occurs in verse 2, where Paul and Barnabas "had no small dissention and debate" with individuals from Judea.

This council came to a decision that was a kind of compromise, different, I imagine, from what each side hoped. Nevertheless, the church members in Antioch rejoiced, and "Paul and Barnabas … with many others, … taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord" (Acts 15:35).

We face a similar challenge. It's important to talk, and I expect ideas will keep coming. But perhaps it's more important that we take some extra time for being quiet and sitting before the Lord in prayer. Let's imitate the believers at the Jerusalem Council by keeping silence and listening to one another and to the voice of God's Spirit.—*gh*

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Beyond 'Beloved'

Although I reread Tobin Miller Shearer's article "Pearls, Swine and 'Beloved' " (Dec. 29) several times, nowhere did I find any evidence of the fact that the 'middle-class white folks' Shearer refers to disliked the movie because they were racist. He seems to make this assumption on the fact that the movie's plot involved primarily African-Americans and that these moviegoers were white.

This is, at best, short-sighted and, at worst, judgmental. Does it then follow that these people are prejudiced against Italian-Americans if they did not enjoy *The Godfather?* Or that they were all misogynists if they did not appreciate *Thelma and Louise?* Shearer should give these people the benefit of the doubt if for no other reason than that they were open-minded enough to see the movie to begin with.

It is sadly ironic that Shearer's rush to draw conclusions about a particular group of people is what lies at the heart of the racism he sought to speak against.—*Peter Lamberts, Audubon, Pa.*

While I affirm the gist of Tobin Miller Shearer's reminders about a "God of possibility," I take issue with his rather reductive politicization of the cinema. That white folks in Wichita, Kan., failed to enjoy *Beloved* (the plot of which might confuse people who have not read Toni Morrison's powerful novel) may not necessarily signify racist sentiments on their parts.

Films are more than expressions of narrative and theme; they also operate in the less-smooth political realms of aesthetics, technical delivery and theatrical performance. Opinions about a film can respond to these latter areas in addition to, or even rather than, any apparent narrative messages.—*Steven P. Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

Surrendering anxiety

Reflections on the March consultation on membership: The issue is and will remain divisive if it is felt at the emotional level to be an issue of right or wrong, a matter of correct biblical interpretation. This precipitates anxiety within us as individuals or a group that somebody must be wrong, and what if it were us? One way to deal with that anxiety is to project it on to someone else: "Oh, good, I found the problem, and it's not me." Each person then is even more defensive to avoid re-experiencing the original anxiety—the fear that I might be wrong—so I become more dogmatically right.

What if each of us were able to surrender ourself and the other to God and let each be responsible to God? Then we are free from the anxiety that we need to think the same way to be one body. We only need to take responsibility for whether we are willing to allow God to point out our error. That may seem like a cop-out, but it is actually harder to do and causes more anxiety and humility than projecting the possibility of error on to the other person.

If we can trust the sincerity of all concerned parties (and I believe we can, because not to trust is to project our own uncertainty), then we can be a body in pursuit of God's movement among us. One of the ingredients of our Anabaptist heritage is the process of a body of believers discerning God's redemptive work among imperfect people. I believe that to accept a position of healthy creative ambivalence on this issue would represent a process that is compatible to our roots and not do any injustice to anyone's pursuit of God's will for them.—*Gerald G. Kauffman, Goshen, Ind.*

Bothered by bothering to be Mennonite

What association does any noble soul need beyond the body of Christ (Editorial, Dec. 15)? Association in the body of Mennonites will not add to but has the potential to distract from and even depreciate the greater association to which God calls us. It is true "we all need association." It is true that "the natural state of the church is to be in relationship." It is true that "instinctively we know we can only be faithful together as a whole, not as individual parts."

That's why "bothering with Mennonite" bothers me. It causes me to think differently about myself in distinction to others in the church of Jesus Christ. Mennonite identity is human-made, bearing a man's name. Menno followers are an extremely small sect in the larger and divinely ordained association called the "ecclesia." If we believe that "bothering with Mennonite" is the only way, then the editorial stands. But that would be extreme exclusivism and thus demand silence from the proponents of diversity, inclusivism and tolerance. I hope we Mennonites do "bother with something," and I trust it will be with all those included in Revelation 5:9. It is the only association and diversity we will enjoy beyond this life. Deo Gloria!—*Leon R. Shirk, East Earl, Pa.*

Clarification

I need to clarify a statement in Brian Stucky's Dec. 22 Readers Say letter. I have not advocated associate membership in the integrated Mennonite Church for congregations that have

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y readers say

been disciplined. In a Dec. 3 editorial, I did cite a "limited membership category" as an option suggested by some, but I did not say that is what should happen. I did say that I think we will have to live with different area conferences taking different approaches to discipline. As long as one area conference accepts a congregation, another area conference's expulsion should not disqualify the congregation from membership in the denomination.—*Paul Schrag, editor,* Mennonite Weekly Review, *Newton, Kan.*

Judgments on judging

Christianity's duty is to proclaim divine truth affirming the 2,000-year-old teachings of the faithful church.

1. Don't judge. For all of us found in the picture that Christ portrays in Matthew 7:1-6, Jesus commands, "Judge not."

2. Do judge. In John 7:24, the Lord Jesus directs, "Judge righteous judgment."

3. Accept God's judgment. Jesus explains in Mark 7:18-23 that all sin germinates within the heart. The Holy Spirit identifies about 25 of those sins in Romans 1:18-24, then in Romans 2:1 gives solemn warning against self-righteous judgment. Romans 2:2 continues, "We know the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things." They are even now under God's judgment.—*Frank Horst, Warden, Wash.*

A farmer's perspective

The article "Created in Christ" in the Dec. 15 issue was excellent. Thanks, Philip Clemens. I also noted the good poem "Grandpa" in the Dec. 29 issue. As one who tilled the soil for 20 years with a tractor identical to the one pictured, I call it a red and yellow Massey Harris, not a red Farmall H.—*Warren Shenk, Mount Joy, Pa.*

Binding & loosing

Why the Mennonite church does not regard same-sex marriages as a Christian option—part 1

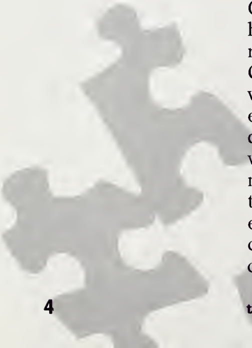
by John D. Roth

Few topics in the church today whiten our knuckles or raise our blood pressure quicker than homosexuality. And for good reason. Embedded in the issue are basic questions about the authority and interpretation of Scripture, the place of personal experience in ethical decision making, the future of the nuclear family, the church's relationship to contemporary culture, and competing understandings of church polity, personal freedom and congregational discipline.

More than a decade ago, the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) at Saskatoon in 1986 and the Mennonite Church (MC) at Purdue in 1987 issued statements of understanding on homosexuality that were based on extensive study and discussion. But in the period since then, public discussion of the topic has been largely overtaken by news reports of contentious area conference proceedings and by often acrimonious letters to the editor of various church papers. Seemingly lost in the public press has been a clear rationale for the church's position—as reflected in the Saskatoon and Purdue statements—as well as the possibility of a civil exchange with brothers and sisters who disagree with the church's official understanding.

If you are a gay or lesbian Christian, the church asks you to be celibate; sexual intercourse is reserved for a man and woman in a committed lifetime relationship of marriage.

I want to defend the current position of the GC and MC denominations on the question of homosexuality and argue for the church's refusal to regard same-sex marriages as a Christian option. Clearly I bring a partisan voice to the discussion, a voice I hope is rooted in a tradition of costly discipleship and radical obedience to Christ. But at the same time I want to hear the voice of the dissident and the minority, recognizing that the Anabaptist tradition of communal discernment calls us to engage rather than avoid the difficult task of conversation and decision making. My only caveat is that those voices who are calling for change do so from a position that the church can—indeed must—take seriously: a position that is ready to engage questions of biblical authority, ready to appeal to the church's highest principles and ideals, ready to agonize over its future within an increasingly complex and secularized culture. If this is the case, then even if we disagree, our conversation and debate over the church's identity and the nature of authority will sustain and infuse our 475-year-old tradition with new life and energy.



What is the church's position? From the vantage point of history, the surprising, even amazing, thing is not that the church is resisting change on the question of homosexuality. In the Purdue '87 statement—echoing the basic themes heard in the Saskatoon '86 document—the Mennonite Church agreed on an "affirmation, confession and covenant regarding human sexuality."

The statement itself went far beyond the question of homosexuality, but on that particular point it clearly calls on the church to repent of its fear and an absence of love toward homosexuals, and it insisted on "loving dialogue" and "an ongoing search for discernment and openness to each other."

More importantly, perhaps, the statement is self-consciously ambiguous at a number of key points. The Purdue '87 statement, for example, does not insist that homosexual orientation is a sin. Indeed it implies (though it does not say this explicitly) that if you are a gay or lesbian Christian and wish to be an active member of the church, the church should welcome you, invite you into full fellowship, regard you as a brother or sister in the faith created in the image of God and called to a life of faithful discipleship.

At the same time, however, the statement is explicit on at least one relevant point: If you are a gay or lesbian Christian, the church asks you to be celibate; sexual intercourse is reserved for a man and woman in a committed lifetime relationship of marriage.

Why? On what basis—by what authority—does the church make this point? Here is almost always where the discussion becomes intense. In making its case, the church has generally appealed to two primary authorities

—Scripture and Christian tradition—and it has consciously relativized or rejected appeals to two other authorities—personal experience and cultural realities—often introduced into the discussion. In my view, almost all the differences we have within the church regarding homosexuality come down to our understanding of these various authorities.

The exegesis in the next section draws heavily on an article by John R. W. Stott, " 'Homosexual Marriage': Why Same-Sex Partnerships Are Not a Christian Option," (*Christianity Today*, Nov. 22, 1985), and one by Richard B. Hays, "Awaiting the Redemption of Our Bodies," (*Sojourners*, July 1991).

Scripture: What does the Bible say about homosexuality? At one level, not very much. Homosexuality is simply not a dominant theme in Scripture; it's not nearly as pronounced, for example, as teachings on wealth or treatment of the poor. But a few things are worth noting.

Nowhere does the Bible speak of homosexuality in a positive way. The Bible doesn't address a lot of things, but it's at least worth noting that nowhere does the Bible suggest that homosexual unions are part of God's intended plan for humanity or a healthy expression of human relations within the church.

By contrast, there are many, many teachings in Scripture about marriage, and all of them—from the creation story in Genesis to the marriage supper of the Lamb in the book of Revelation—refer to the union of a man and a woman as part of God's intended purpose for humans living in relationship to each other.

When the Bible does speak about homosexuality, the clear sentiment of the teaching is always negative. References to homosexual intercourse in Scripture are always associated with the fallenness of human nature and rebellion against God.

Thus, in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10, we find homosexuals included in lists of people who do things unacceptable to God. In 1 Corinthians, Paul is clearly exasperated with the church members there, some of whom apparently believe they are so spiritually exalted that the old moral rules no longer apply to them. He confronts them with a blunt question: "Don't you know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God?" Then he gives an illustrative list of the sorts of people he means: "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers … thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers and robbers." Included in the list are two distinct references to homosexual practice—one referring to the passive partner in homosexual activities (a male prostitute, usually a young boy), the other referring more generally to homosexual intercourse. Paul says these behaviors used to be practiced by some of the Corinthians, but now that they have come under the lordship of Christ they ought to leave these practices behind. The remainder of the chapter calls on the Corinthians to glorify God in their bodies, because they now belong to God and no longer to themselves.

An even more crucial text for Christian ethics on homosexuality comes from Romans, where the condemnation of homosexual intercourse finds expression in an explicitly theological context: "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. … Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their own error" (Romans 1:24-27).

Here Paul is not presenting a code of sexual ethics or even a warning about judgment for particular sins. Rather, he is offering a diagnosis of the disordered human condition. It is not that homosexuality provokes the wrath of God but that it is a consequence of God's decision to allow human beings to follow their own thinking and desires. The list of unrighteous behaviors here is a list of symptoms pointing to the fact that humanity as a whole—Jews and Greeks, gays and straights alike—have turned away from God and fallen under the power of sin. Homosexual intercourse gets special attention because it seems to provide a particularly graphic image of the way human fallenness has distorted God's intention for human relationships. When human beings engage in homosexual activity, they enact an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual reality: the rejection of the Creator's design. They embody the spiritual condition of those who have "exchanged the truth about God for a lie."

Homosexuality is simply not a dominant theme in Scripture; it's not nearly as pronounced, for example, as teachings on wealth or treatment of the poor. But when the Bible does speak about homosexuality, the clear sentiment of the teaching is always negative.

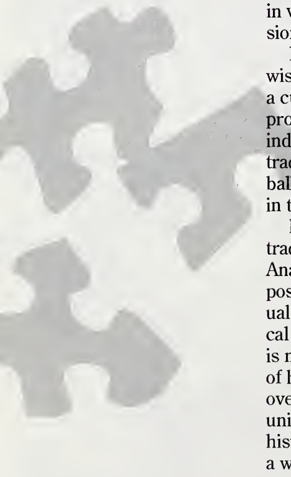
It's important to note that homosexual acts are not uniquely reprehensible sins—they are no worse than other expressions of human unrighteousness listed in the passage—but they remain for Paul concrete evidence of humanity's confusion and alienation from God the Creator.

Lest heterosexuals feel particularly smug or self-righteous, the passage ends in Romans 2:1 with the reminder: "Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things."

Ultimately the self-righteous, sneering judgment of homosexuality may be just as sinful as the homosexual behavior itself. But even though this is true—we are all sinners standing in the light of God's mercy and grace—it does nothing to defend or justify or normalize or bless homosexual activity.

Healthy institutions and healthy individuals are always grounded in a sense of tradition—a living tradition—that provides the ballast or the filtering we need to stay oriented in the midst of the change all around us.

Christian tradition: A second kind of authority to which the church appeals in making its case against homosexual intercourse and marriage is Christian tradition. This is not tradition for its own sake or merely the inertia of history. Rather it is the collective wisdom of the gathered body of Christ as it has been discerned and hammered out over time and expressed in various confessional statements and decisions.



I am aware that appeals to the collective wisdom of the past are not regarded highly in a culture that tends to equate change with progress. But healthy institutions and healthy individuals are always grounded in a sense of tradition—a living tradition—that provides the ballast or the filtering we need to stay oriented in the midst of the change all around us.

For nearly 2,000 years within the Christian tradition, and for some 475 years in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, the accepted position of the church has been that homosexual intercourse or marriage goes against biblical teaching and God's will for humanity. That is not to say there have never been examples of homosexual love within the church or that overt resistance to homosexuality has been uniform throughout history. But never in the history of the Christian church has there been a widely accepted theological defense or public endorsement of homosexual marriage.

Traditions can be wrong. And it may well be that the church will, over time, change its position on the question of blessing homosexual marriages. But for the church to do so in the space of 10 or 20 years, in the immediate aftermath of a large-scale "sexual revolution" in Western culture, is a bad idea. Within the grand sweep of Christian history, such a decision seems to reflect more the accident of a particular cultural mood than the wisdom of a carefully reasoned argument.

Some readers will undoubtedly find these appeals to Scripture or Christian tradition insufficient. They may seem too subjective, too open to manipulation by the people who happen to be in power. That is a valid concern. The dangers of confusing one's interpretation of Scripture or one's particular tradition with the will of God are genuine, especially for people in positions of power. But within the Christian community, Scripture and tradition must at least be considered carefully and respectfully if long-standing ethical assumptions are to be challenged or overturned.

If it seems unreasonable to appeal to Scripture and tradition in matters of sexual boundaries, consider as a thought experiment the question of incest. I would guess that virtually all Christians agree that incest—sexual relations between very close family members—is wrong. While it may be thinkable that siblings or a parent and adult child could somehow move from an affectionate relationship to an erotic relationship—that they could have consensual sex and take appropriate precautions for birth control—no one would want to demand that the church bless such a relationship or that the community of faith celebrate the marriage of siblings or a marriage between a parent and child. Should there be trust and intimacy and vulnerability and intensely close relationships between siblings or between a parent and child? By all means. Certain kinds of intimacy are appropriate within these relationships. Should siblings marry or have sexual intimacy and intercourse? No.

Ask yourself why. To what sorts of authority are we appealing when we draw this particular line, which seems self-evident in our minds? The authorities, I suggest, are no different from the ones to which the church has appealed when it withholds its blessing on homosexual unions: There are clear biblical passages against incest, and there is the weight of the collective wisdom of the church, reinforced over time, that such relationships go against God's best intentions for humanity.

This is the first of a two-part article by John D. Roth, professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College and editor of The Mennonite Quarterly Review. *The article is adapted from a presentation he made in a Goshen College chapel in February 1998. Part two will appear in next week's issue.*

Homosexuality and the healing of the church

by Weldon Nisly

The church has always known that God is a welcoming God. Yet the church has also known great controversy over who is welcomed and on whose terms. The church also believes that everything is embodied in love—God's love. But there has been anything but consensus on just who is loved in a way that welcomes them into the church. Church divisions across history primarily come down to controversies over "insiders" and "outsiders."

No concern in the church today is more divisive or less given to real resolution and reconciliation by turning to the usual biblical texts or contemporary resources than the issue of homosexuality. We will not study our way to consensus. We will only live and love our way to a new way of being the church.

Let's consider a story in Acts 10 of two trances and two transformed people. Cornelius had a vision of God's call to him and dared to answer, "What is it, Lord?" In this vision he was told that he would find a man named Peter in a town named Joppa.

The next man to have a vision was Peter. On a journey, he stopped about noon at Joppa, tired and hungry. As food was being prepared Peter went up on the roof to pray. While praying, he saw heaven open and a sheet lowered by its four corners. In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures, reptiles and birds. Peter heard a voice saying, "Rise, kill and eat."

Without hesitation Peter declared vehemently, "Absolutely not, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean!"

The voice said to him, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." The voice said to Peter again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." This happened three times, and the sheet was suddenly taken up into heaven (Acts 10:9-16).

Peter came out of this trance greatly puzzled. Just then three men came to the gate and begged him to come meet Cornelius. Suddenly Peter begins to "see"—truly see!

Here comes the transforming point for the church. In his encounter with Cornelius, Peter said, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean."

Two things beg to be seen in this transforming encounter. The first is that Peter had an ecstatic, astonishing, mind-altering experience. After a trance you see differently. The Greek word for trance ("ekstasis") literally means to move "away from" what is "stalled" or "constipated."

These are vivid images for Peter and the church today. We need Peter's trance to see how to get unstuck and to get moving again. This is not an out-of-body experience but a call to move away from our "stuckness" in a judgmental world of clean and unclean. That call is to regard no one unclean whom God has called clean. It is a call to a new, life-giving church that moves toward God through Jesus Christ with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The second thing to be seen in Peter's trance is that the images were of creatures and food, but the vision was about human relationships.

Only when we see with Peter's trance-filled eyes will the trauma over homosexuality be transformed into the healing and hope so desperately needed in the church.

God welcomes us—all of us—to this new life in Christ. It is an eternal call to faithfulness to God in Christ on a journey with Peter, a journey to wholeness, to integrity, and to nonviolent love in all relationships at all times.

God welcomes us—all of us—to this new life in Christ. It is an eternal call to faithfulness to God in Christ as we travel with Peter on a journey to wholeness, to integrity and to nonviolent love in all relationships at all times.

This in no way says, "Come and believe and do whatever you want." It does hear Jesus say: "Come and follow. … Come and labor and rest in me. … Come and live and grow in faithfulness and love with my community." It dares to hear Peter proclaim, "God has clearly shown me that no one should be considered unclean or an outsider."

Weldon Nisly is pastor of Seattle Mennonite Church. This article is adapted from a sermon he preached there in February 1998.

Kernels of help bound for North Korea

Farmers donate 50 truckloads of corn for MCC drive

AKRON, Pa.—Faced with a bumper corn crop and low market prices, many U.S. farmers last fall were wondering what to do with their excess harvest. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) provided an option. A severe famine in North Korea, where the fall crops produced only half the necessary food, sparked an MCC corn drive.

> **We almost had to hold back on donations because the ship can only handle 50 truckloads.**
>
> *—Kevin King*

Fifty truckloads of donated corn—nearly 40,000 bushels—are scheduled to leave Houston on Jan. 20 aboard the Spirit of Grace, a ship operated by Friend Ships, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization that delivers humanitarian aid around the world (see story below).

"We want the corn to be in North Korea in March," says John Hostetler of the MCC East Coast regional office. "That's just a couple of months before their harvest, when food is extremely short."

The corn will be distributed in villages in the northern part of the country where people are suffering most from a famine caused by three years of drought and flooding. An estimated 1 to 3 million North Koreans are believed to have died from hunger-related causes since 1995. Much of the corn will be distributed in nurseries, kindergartens and hospitals.

The drive began in September, and corn soon started pouring in from the East Coast to the Plains. "We almost had to hold back on donations because the ship can only handle 50 truckloads," says Kevin King, MCC material resources director.

Newton Kansan photo by

Marvin Gerbrand stacks bags of corn at a Walton (Kan.) elevator. The corn is part of a 50-truckload shipment from Mennonite Central Committee to North Korea, which is mired in a food shortage.

Mennonite, Old Order Mennonite and Amish volunteers put the corn in 55-pound bags. The work was done during evenings and Saturdays at mills and elevators that permitted MCC to use their facilities. Most trucking of the corn to Houston was also donated or subsidized.

Charles Geiser, who coordinated the drive in the MCC Great Lakes regions, says he asked for one truckload of corn from one community and ended up with six. "I'm pleased and grateful for the cooperation of so many people in different areas," he says.

MCC Great Lakes gathered 21 truckloads of corn. Farmers in the East Coast region donated 20 truckloads plus an additional four loads, which were shipped to Central America as part of Hurricane Mitch relief efforts. Nine truckloads came from the Central States region.

"It was a little slow getting started, but in the end it turned out well," says Central States staff member Vern Preheim. "People really felt good about it once it was done."

The corn drive was MCC's first in five years.—*JoJo Fisher for MCC News Service*

Ship's log: from military to humanitarian work

AKRON, Pa.—While Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing the corn, Los Angeles-based Friend Ships is providing the means of transporting it to North Korea.

Friend Ships, a nonprofit organization that delivers humanitarian aid around the world, has a fleet of five ships crewed by Christian volunteers and supported by private donors. Spirit of Grace, which will carry the MCC corn, was once a World War II supply ship.

"When I toured the ship, I could see where machine guns and heavy ammunition were mounted," says MCC material resource director Kevin King. "It was moving to realize that something that once brought death now brings life."—*JoJo Fisher for MCC News Service*

CPT members arrested after stepping between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli soldiers

HEBRON, West Bank—Nonviolent intervention in what could have been a bloody confrontation between Palestinians and Israelis got two Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) workers in Hebron arrested Jan. 10 by Israeli authorities.

CPT members Sara Reschly and Pierre Shantz have since been released after a judge ruled that the case against them was weak, but a police investigation continues.

The incident started when about 100 Palestinians marched to protest the closing of a local mosque and the placing of a curfew on the 30,000 Palestinians living in the section of Hebron still under Israeli military control. As the marchers approached the border between the Palestinian-controlled and Israeli-controlled sectors of the city, the marchers were met by Israeli soldiers armed with rubber-coated metal bullets, tear gas and sound grenades.

Reschly, Shantz and three other CPT members positioned themselves between the soldiers and demonstrators. Whenever the soldiers moved into firing position, the CPT members shouted, "This is a nonviolent demonstration! They are not throwing rocks!"

"I'm convinced that if CPT had not interfered when the soldiers were ready to fire, the situation would have immediately become violent," says team member Mark Frey.

No shots were fired during the 90-minute standoff. But Shantz was slapped twice on the face and kneed in the back by an Israeli officer. Civilian police arrested Reschly and Shantz on charges of interfering with the Israeli authorities, including assault. Another CPT member, Sydney Stigge-Kaufman, was also briefly detained at the protest site.

CPT photo

Sydney Stigge-Kaufman (right, in cap), a Christian Peacemaker Teams member in the West Bank , takes her position between Palestinian demonstrators and armed Israeli soldiers during a Jan. 10 protest in Hebron.

Reschly was released after several hours, but Shantz was kept overnight. Police pressured them to avoid a court appearance by agreeing to stay out of Hebron for 15 days, which Reschly and Shantz refused. In a Jan. 11 court hearing, the judge allowed the two CPT workers to return to Hebron. He released them on a 2,000 shekel ($500) bond and confiscated their passports while the police continue their investigation. If no further charges are brought by Feb. 1, the bond money and passports will be returned.

Palestinian lawyer Jonathan Kuttab doubts the police will bring charges. "You have a lot of moral power that both sides recognize," he says. "Running around without guns throws [both sides] off and gives you leverage."

Palestinians praised the CPT action. One demonstration leader told the members, "You have done your work."

The demonstration ended when older Palestinian men lined up their prayer rugs to pray while Israeli soldiers looked on.—*CPT News Service*

Methodists back CPT campaign

A Mennonite, Church of the Brethren and Quaker peace initiative has received Methodist support.

The North Central New York Conference of the United Methodist Church has passed a resolution calling for conference participation in Christian Peacemaker Teams' Campaign for Secure Dwellings.

The campaign links West Bank Palestinian families facing home demolition with North American congregations and individuals who can support and advocate for the Palestinians.—*Signs of the Times*

Safety issues force MBM workers from Dagestan

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers Phil and Alice Shenk and their family unexpectedly had to leave the autonomous Russian Republic of Dagestan Dec. 30, 1998, after being informed 11 days earlier that their visas would not be extended beyond the Jan. 1, 1999, expiration date.

Dagestan officials were primarily concerned about continued kidnapping and violence in the heavily Muslim region, which borders the Caspian Sea and the Republic of Chechnya. "They do not feel that they can guarantee the safety of any foreigners for visa extension at this time," Phil Shenk says.

A Swedish couple serving with Youth With a Mission was abducted in January 1998 by armed men in Makhachkala, the country's largest city. A Phoenix man serving with the Evangelical Alliance Mission was abducted in November 1998, also in Makhachkala.

The Shenks, in Dagestan since 1996, were in Bookhnog, an isolated village of 200. Surrounded by the Caucasus Mountains, Bookhnog has few outside influences and is a four-hour drive from Makhachkala and two hours from Derbent, Dagestan's second largest city.

"Our situation is far more peaceful and secure than in any of the cities of Dagestan," Shenk says. "We have felt safe here and surrounded by people who love us."

Phil and Alice Shenk likely will go back to Dagestan for a couple of weeks later this year to assess the possibility of returning long-term.—*MBM News Service*

MEDA helps fuel vocational change

Maynard
SHIRK FUELS
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MEDA photo by John Longhurst

Former heavy equipment mechanic Maynard Shirk started his own fuel-oil business in 1997 so he could spend more time with his children. To help get started, Shirk went through Mennonite Economic Development Associates' ASSETS program to learn business basics such as bookkeeping and accounting.

CONESTOGA, Pa.—It's finally cold in Pennsylvania, and Maynard Shirk couldn't be happier.

Until late December, the state had been having unseasonably warm weather, including record high temperatures in the early part of the month. While welcome for most Pennsylvanians, it was awful for Shirk.

But he can be forgiven for being out of step with everyone else. After all, he sells fuel oil—and the nice weather didn't help sales. What makes it harder is that Shirk, owner of Shirk Fuels in Conestoga, has only seen unseasonable winter temperatures since starting his business in 1997.

"I made slightly better profit per gallon than I projected in my first 12 months, but I sold a lot less than projected," he says.

A former heavy equipment mechanic, Shirk, 51, started his business after enrolling in Mennonite Economic Development's ASSETS program. Based in Lancaster, Pa., ASSETS, started in 1993 to help lower- and moderate-income people start small businesses. Shirk learned basic skills such as bookkeeping and accounting. "It helped me learn what I needed to know to start my business," he says.

Shirk, a member of Masonville Mennonite Church, Washington Boro, Pa., looked for a job change because he wanted to spend more time with his children. "Work as a heavy equipment mechanic kept me busy 10 to 12 hours a day."

He decided on the fuel oil business because it would give him time off in summer, when his children were out of school, but be busy in winter. Also, he did a bit of research and found that there were no other small independent fuel oil distributors in his area.

Today he serves 180 customers from his green and silver truck. So far, he is happy with how things have gone. "It'll take time to be viable," he says, noting he hopes to move 100,000 gallons of fuel this year, up from the 67,000 gallons he moved in his first 12 months.

"About 500 customers would make it into a good business," he says.

Of course, that is if the weather cooperates. Shirk says that means cold, snowy conditions "and a good, strong wind to go with it."—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

Volleyball marathon nets funds for MDS

To benefit Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), Boyertown (Pa.) Mennonite Church went to court Nov. 27-28, 1998. The volleyball court.

The congregation hosted a 24-hour volleyball marathon to benefit MDS's relief efforts in Puerto Rico. Participants raised $2,535 to help rebuild and repair houses hit by Hurricane Georges, which swept through the island in September 1998.

MDS has set up a long-term project in Puerto Rico.
—*MCC News Service*

Looking good outside, feeling good inside

MEDA photo by John Longhurst

Vance

LANCASTER, Pa.—Janatt Vance likes to listen to people. She also likes to cut and style hair. So it seemed natural enough to her to start a business which combines the two.

Vance, 27, graduated Dec. 10 from the ASSETS small-business development program in Lancaster. The program was started by Mennonite Economic Development Associates in 1993.

"I wanted to serve God but wasn't sure I wanted to do full-time church work," she says. "I love to do hair styling. ... Through it, I can minister at the same time."

When people go to a hair dresser, they want to look better, says Vance, a member of South Christian Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster. "But I want them to also feel better by giving them my time," she says. "Many people just need someone to listen to them. ... If they feel down, maybe I can lift them up. I certainly can pray for them."

For Vance, the 13-week ASSETS program was vital to helping her realize her dream.

"It gave me confidence, helped me with important things like bookkeeping, cash flow, legal issues—all the things I need to know to start and run a business," she says, adding that she hopes to open her salon in downtown Lancaster this month.—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

Prayer program response delights COM

NEWTON, Kan.—Years ago, when Jeannie Zehr began working for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), an older mission worker confided in her, "People just aren't praying for us like they used to."

"That really touched me," says Zehr, COM secretary for mission communication.

The growth of email and the arrival of a volunteer have now enabled COM staff to put together the Prayer Partner Program—and the response has been overwhelming.

"Marietta Sawatzky came back [from 32 years of mission work in Taiwan] about 18 months ago with a real concern for prayer, praying for mission work in general," Zehr says. "She also wanted to do some volunteer work. I thought maybe this was the time to put together something we'd dreamed about for years."

So in May 1998, COM staff sent out flyers describing the program to every General Conference Mennonite Church congregation in North America. "We invited people to sign up individually or as representatives of small groups that get together regularly," Zehr says.

"We thought if we get between 25 and 50 people, that would feel like a step in the right direction."

That number is closer to 300, according to the latest count. "The response has been amazing and gratifying," Zehr says.

The Prayer Partners get monthly lists of prayer concerns from COM workers, which Sawatzky compiles from letters and other messages. In addition, COM staff members email to Prayer Partners all the urgent requests—such as illnesses or injuries—that come through the COM offices in Newton and Winnipeg.

Starting in December 1998, the COM office also began sending mailings on international church leaders. Each month's mailing will include a brief profile and photo of a church leader, plus a prayer request. The first three were for church leaders in Botswana, Brazil and South Korea.

The Prayer Partner information is also sent to most COM workers to help them keep in touch. "I always thought of COM as one big family where everyone knows each other," Zehr says, "and then I began to realize that workers really only know those they might have met at COM meetings or mission seminars."

In addition to the number of people responding to the Prayer Partners program, COM staff members have also been surprised by their ages. An unofficial tabulation shows the largest number of partners to be in their 40s, 50s and 60s. But there are also representatives from younger and older age groups.

"We sort of figured it would be an older people's interest, and that's why there would be fewer numbers," Zehr says. "Maybe we set our expectations too low."

Mennonite Board of Missions and Eastern Mennonite Missions have similar prayer programs.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

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by the way ...

Republican Jerry Moran, a Mennonite Brethren from Hays, Kan., is the newest co-sponsor of the Peace Tax Fund in the U.S. House of Representatives.—*National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund*

Heritage center coming to Virginia valley

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, home to Mennonites for more than two and a half centuries, could see construction start on a Mennonite heritage center in 1999. The region is currently the only major Mennonite community in North America without such a facility.

A local group wants to donate five acres in the Harrisonburg area for the heritage center. The land is valued at $300,000. Other plans call for a hotel and restaurant on an adjacent 10 acres. The land has already been rezoned for the project.

The Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians, which has been leading the drive for the center, has agreed to expand its focus to include the Church of the Brethren. The project will be called the Shenandoah Valley Anabaptist Cultural Center.

1770 Germantown church to be restored

PHILADELPHIA—The 1770 meetinghouse of the first Mennonite congregation in North America will be restored to its original appearance, the board overseeing the building has decided.

But the Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust knows restoration of Germantown Mennonite Church will not be easy. The building has undergone many significant changes, including the addition of an elevated platform and pulpit, a rear room for Sunday school, wainscotting and lighting. No blueprints or illustrations exist of the unaltered meetinghouse.

The congregation in Germantown, now part of Philadelphia, was established in 1683. The 1770 meetinghouse was regularly used for worship into the mid-20th century.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Photo by John Yoder

SST sends 6,000th student

Goshen (Ind.) College student Sophie Histand (right) receives congratulations from Humberto Perez (left), Goshen Spanish professor, as the 6,000th student in the school's Study-Service Term. Histand, a sophomore from Sellersville, Pa., is one of 41 Goshen students who will spend the spring term overseas under SST. In a Jan. 6 ceremony, Perez drew Histand's name at random out of a fur hat held by SST director Wilbur Birkey (center). Perez is a native of Costa Rica, while the fur hat is from China; both countries are among the locations for SST assignments. Goshen's SST program is 30 years old.

Center sends first discipleship teams

FORT WAYNE, Ind.—The first teams from a new discipleship center in Fort Wayne will complete training this month and start their mission work.

The Great Lakes Discipleship Center and its Reaching and Discipling program opened in September 1998 with support from Mennonite Board of Missions. One RAD team will go to London while another is bound for Burgos, Spain. The London team will help with church-planting efforts. The Burgos team will assist in a drug rehabilitation and prison ministry. Each team has four members. MBM has supported the programs in both cities for many years.

Another RAD team is scheduled to begin training in the fall, while another could start in March if there is enough interest.—*MBM News Service*

EMU fills advancement, development position

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Richard Gunden has been named vice president for advancement and director of development at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg. He started his position on Jan. 4.

Gunden, previously of Monclova, Ohio, was chief executive officer of the Ability Center in Toledo, Ohio, a center for independent living. He was also president of a consulting and training service to nonprofit, governmental and educational organizations.

He replaces Daryl E. Peifer, who resigned to return to private business. Gunden is a 1968 EMU graduate and holds a master's degree in rehabilitation administration from DePaul University.

Births

Brenneman, Rachael Renae, Dec. 23, to Bob and Kim (Gingerich) Brenneman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Clark, Hunter Tyler, Dec. 12, to Julie and Keith Clark, Fishersville, Va.

Edwards, Wynton Gabriel, Dec. 7, to Sharon (Miller) and Steve Edwards, Goshen, Ind.

Eichelberger, Jake Austin, Dec. 29, to Brent and Renee (Litwiller) Eichelberger, Hopedale, Ill.

Henry, Emily Meghan, Dec. 18, to Terri and Mike Henry, Scio, Ore.

Hockman, Eve Coryn, Dec. 21, to Ronald and Sheri Lyn (Thomas) Hockman, Telford, Pa.

McFarland, Joel Cable, Dec. 22, to David III and Laura (Cable) McFarland, Dartmouth, Mass.

Nisly, Brandon Lee, March 12, 1992, received for adoption Dec. 16, 1998, by Betty and Mitchell Nisly, Milford, Neb.

Nisly, Brianna Marie, Dec. 15, 1995, received for adoption Dec. 16, 1998, by Betty and Mitchell Nisly, Milford, Neb.

Schindler, Joshua Christian, Dec. 5, to Bethany (Lyndaker) and Wayne Schindler, Turin, N.Y.

Sommers, Benjamin Kumar, Dec. 26, to Kendal and Robina (David) Sommers, Goshen, Ind.

Stutzman, Parker Lyn, Nov. 18, to Stacy (Schweitzer) and Mark Stutzman, Albany, Ore.

Marriages

Amstutz/Meyer: Jenny Amstutz, Pandora, Ohio, and Jeff Meyer, Ottawa, Ohio, Dec. 12 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Byers/Clum: Heather Byers, Bluffton, Ohio, and Brent Clum, Bluffton, Dec. 12 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Diller/Jayberg: Lisa Diller, Hesston, Kan., and Pat Jayberg, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 19 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Gingerich/Rudolph: Blaine Gingerich, Kouts, Ind., and Jodie Rudolph, Kouts, Nov. 28.

Goshow/Lacher: Jennifer Lynn Goshow, Perkasie, Pa., and Chad Edward Lacher, Souderton, Pa., Dec. 27 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Jones/Moon: Pam Jones, Lexington, Ky., and Dan Moon, Connellsville, Pa., Nov. 9 at Townsend, Tenn.

Leu/Short: Helen Stuckey Leu, West Unity, Ohio. and Theron Short, Archbold, Ohio, Oct. 24 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Deaths

Grieser, Chauncy, 80, Pedro, Ohio, died Dec. 3. Spouse: Ilva Nofziger Grieser. Parents: Daniel and Rosa Beck Grieser (deceased). Other survivors: children Hazel Schifflett, Judith Kelly, David, Dana; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 5 at Wayside Chapel, Pedro, Ohio, and Dec. 7 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Knox, Elsie, 79, Harrisburg, Ore., died Dec. 13. Spouse: Vernon Knox (deceased). Parents: Frank and Annie Hostetler Kropf (deceased). Survivors: children Marion, Wayne, Paul, Victor, Ed, Arnold; 14 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany, Ore.

Moyer, Robert, 46, Norristown, Pa., died Dec. 28. Parents: Abram (deceased) and Elizabeth Moyer. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Lansdale, Pa.

Peters, Aldus, 85, Quarryville, Pa., died Dec. 25. Spouse: Nora Metzler Peters. Parents: Aldus and Emma Chambers Peters (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Elsie Minnich, Martin, Walter, Ray, Roy; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28.

Root, Mary Harnish, 94, Lancaster, Pa., died Dec. 22. Spouse: Clyde Root (deceased). Parents: Henry and Magdalena Herr Harnish (deceased). Survivors: children J. Clyde, Marian Shenk; eight grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 26 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Schlabach, Mary Troyer, 75, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Dec. 22. Spouse: Owen Schlabach; Parents: Andy and Ada Miller Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Esther Warren, Clara, Frances Keim, Freda Troyer, Nancy Miller, Ray, Lester; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Stalter, Harvey, 82, Chenoa, Ill., died Dec. 25. Spouse: Jennie Blackmer Stalter. Parents: Christian and Mary Kiefer Stalter (deceased). Other survivors: children Nancy Murphy, Donna Smith, Dan, Daryl, Merle, Steve; 14 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Waldo Mennonite Church, Flanagan, Ill.

Yoder, Edith Adeline Weaver, 79, Hesston, Kan., died Dec. 21. Spouse: Reuben Yoder (deceased). Parents: Reuben and Lucinda Ella Neuhauser Weaver (deceased). Survivors: children Marcia Lind, Sondra Glick, Lucinda Schlabach; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 26 at Hesston.

Correction: Stanley Shenk was omitted under surviving children of Retta Boyer Shenk in the Jan. 5 issue.

classifieds

- **Amigo Centre** has an immediate opening for a ***housekeeper*** This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Please contact Dana Sommers at 616-651-2811, Dana@amigocentre.org or write to Amigo Centre, 26455 Banker Road, Sturgis, MI 49091.

- **Souderton Mennonite Church** seeks a full-time ***minister of worship and outreach***. Qualifications include solid commitment to Anabaptist theology, passion for worship and skills in organizing people for outreach ministry. Not a preaching assignment.

  Send resume to Souderton Mennonite Church, attn. Leadership Search Committee, 105 W. Chestnut St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, an accredited K-8 school located in Lancaster, Pa., has an opening for an ***administrator***. Applications are welcomed from qualified individuals who have a commitment to Anabaptist values and Christian education. Contact Gary Yoder, 1028 Frances Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601; 717-394-5239 (evening); 717-581-6100 ext.128 (daytime); email BY10282aol.com.

- **European Heritage Tour, *April 29-May 20***, will feature Anabaptist sites in historic Europe intertwined with Swiss alpenhorn and German mandolin concert, visiting your ancestral village, Rhine River cruise, and lots more as we tour Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France and Netherlands.

  Write for eight-page tour itinerary: Lemar and Lois Ann Mast, 220 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543-9701; 610-286-0258; mast@masthof.org.

- **Growing, urban congregation** seeks full-time ***lead pastor or pastoral team*** to begin 9-99. Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church has about 175 active members and attenders. Key responsibilities include working with multiple staff, leadership committees, preaching, counseling and teaching. Strong Anabaptist focus a must.

  Send MLI form to Larry Hauder, PNW Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; email questions to lhauder@compuserve.com.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is recruiting a ***Ten Thousand Villages regional sales manager*** located in the southwestern U.S. Qualifications include a degree in business/marketing (preferred); experience in retail management; knowledge of Ten Thousand Villages products; good personal, administrative and communication skills; and flexibility in traveling throughout the region. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position.

  For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

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- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting two ***Ten Thousand Villages company store managers*** in Princeton, N.J., and Northampton, Mass. Qualifications include a degree in business administration, marketing and/or experience and training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability; ability to attractively display merchandise and arrange store layout; enjoy meeting the public and dealing with customers; ability to train, schedule and supervise sales clerks; experience in ordering, bookkeeping and inventory maintenance; interest and/or experience in advertising and promotion. These are full-time, two-year salaried positions.

For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for five ***Ten Thousand Villages company store assistant managers*** in Bryn Mawr, Pa. (32 hrs/wk), Princeton, N.J. (32 hrs/wk), New Haven, Conn. (32 hrs/wk), New Haven, Conn. (20 hrs/wk) and Northampton, Mass. (32 hrs/wk). Qualifications include experience and/or training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability coupled with good organizational skills; willing and able to learn a variety of tasks under the direction of the manager; enjoy interacting with a wide variety of people and an appreciation for customer service; ability to cover the responsibilities of the manager in his or her absence; support of and commitment to the mission of Ten Thousand Villages. These are two-year salaried positions.

For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for the ***staff associate for urban peacemaking***—Mennonite Conciliation Services position at MCC U.S., Akron, Pa. Qualifications include a commitment to Christ and his way of peace; training or experience in peace and justice concerns, especially conciliation, organizing, criminal justice, peace education, racism, gender issues; openness to advanced training in these areas; bachelor's degree in related field preferred; strong urban experience; especially with racially and ethnically diverse communities; strong interpersonal skills and ability to relate to a broad spectrum of constituency groups; well-developed writing, public speaking and teaching skills for adult and youth audiences; ability to work independently as well as part of a staff team. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position.

For more information or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee human resources department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org.

- **Landis Homes** is seeking an ***adult day services manager*** for dementia care. A full-time position for a new facility serving people with dementia. Desire LPN or BSW with two years of experience with older adults in a supervisory capacity and experience or interest in people with memory impairment.

Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing care retirement community affiliated with Franconia Conference, seeks a ***CEO***. The facility consists of 227 independent living units, 90 skilled nursing beds and 36 assisted living beds. Candidates must have the equivalent of a master's degree and five years experience in health care administration. Must be skilled in public relations, human resources and financial matters as well as overseeing operations based on established policies, including federal, state and local regulations. Must have demonstrated major leadership skills by facilitating and leading strategic direction setting in cooperation with a board of directors. Must be able to articulate and demonstrate commitment to the philosophy, values, mission and vision of the organization. Essential skills include current and future site and program development, management team building and supervision, and technology systems integration. A valid Pennsylvania nursing home administrator license is an asset. Must be a member of a Mennonite church.

Interested candidates shall submit a confidential resume by Feb. 15, 1999, to Stan Alderfer, chair of the search committee, 144 Telford Pike, Telford, PA 18969.

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July 30 - August 6
Communicating the Gospel in our Culture
Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary
Lois Barrett, Ph.D., Commission on Home Ministries, General Conference Mennonite Church
Includes weekend Continuing Education event, July 31
Leadership for Church Growth
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS
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by Gordon Houser

Confession time. Like many others in our culture, I am a sports fan. My wife may remind you that "fan" is short for "fanatic." I don't think I'm that bad, but I must admit to becoming too emotionally involved in some sporting events.

I'm not alone. For any of you who think men don't express emotion, just go to a ball game or meet them on the basketball court.

It's not only men who get into sports. I was sitting in the Los Angeles airport on a Monday morning and overheard two elderly women discuss the fate of their beloved Detroit Lions in the football game the day before. Their conversation betrayed not only emotional investment but an extensive knowledge of the sport.

Sports is a major part of our culture. It is big business, leading to athletes getting huge salaries, owners making big bucks and holding Super Bowls (see below).

Sports is part of our psyche. Attend a high school football or basketball game and you'll encounter strong emotions from people who may appear docile on other occasions. And the mixture of music, elaborate cheers and colorful uniforms at a high school or college game are as filled with ritual as any tribal custom.

Sports is a spiritual arena as well. Something seems wrong when people are more concerned about the outcome of a game than the fate of people dying from hunger or war. A psychiatrist has said that Kansas State football fans may indeed have been suffering depression after the unexpected loss that knocked them out of the national title chase. Such misplaced emotional attachment demands prayer.

Pray for me. For us.

The best of 1998

Here are the top five books I read and films I saw in the last year. I limited the films to 1998 releases, which meant leaving out some that were released late in 1997 or those that didn't make it to my neck of the woods in time to see before now. I list them in alphabetical order.

Books

- *Cities of the Plain: A Novel* by Cormac McCarthy
- *Damascus Gate: A Novel* by Robert Stone
- *Heart of Flesh* by Joan D. Chittister
- *Jesus and the Victory of God* by N.T. Wright
- *Slaves in the Family* by Edward Ball

Films

- *Babe: Pig in the City*
- *Saving Private Ryan*
- *Shakespeare in Love*
- *Smoke Signals*
- *The Truman Show*

Football's high holiday

by Ted Lewis

Demetrius addressing the image-makers of Ephesus: "Men, you know we get our wealth from this business"—Acts 19:25

Like the image of the goddess Artemis falling from heaven, the Super Bowl seems to descend on us annually from the mythic heights of our spectator culture. In fact, the word "super" in Latin means "above, higher," which fits well with an event superseding all other events.

The highest-paid athletes compete while people pay the highest ticket prices. The highest numbers of TV viewers watch as advertisers pay the highest prices for 30 or 60 seconds. The city with the highest bid for hosting the game rakes in the highest revenues from pregame thrills. "Super" is an apt prefix for the Bowl of Bowls.

What about "bowl"? This word comes from a Latin noun for "bubble" and a Teutonic verb meaning "to swell." The Super Bowl, figuratively speaking, is a swelling bubble floating high up in the clouds, like the Goodyear blimp.

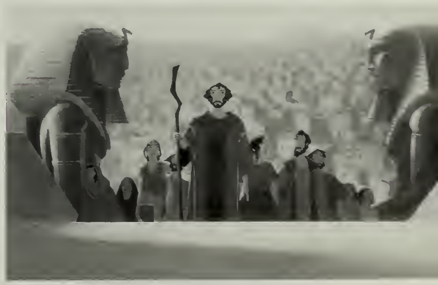
Imagine Paul, the bubble-burster, speaking in the host city as he spoke in Ephesus: "Your enshrined images are not divine." You worship the symbols of your culture, but next to the living God they're not that great. They're superficial. At this, the image-makers of Ephesus (relying on the sale of idols to pilgrims) went nuts. A riot started. For two hours they shouted, "Great is Artemis!"

I guess Paul struck a sensitive nerve. Religion and economics were so interlaced that he threatened both. "If Artemis is robbed of her divine majesty," reasoned Demetrius, "our trade will lose its good name." This reminds me of the Babel tower builders who wanted to make a name. The moneymakers of football's high holiday would also be threatened by God's weighty glory, which can lower the lofty greatness of human glory.

Ted Lewis attends Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.

films

The Prince of Egypt (PG) is better than I expected. It does not match the complexity of the biblical story, but it manages some psychological depth. (It is not for young children.) The animation is striking, particularly the three-dimensional appearances, which leave the characters looking flat. One interesting touch is a dance of hieroglyphs to show the killing of Hebrew children. I liked the songs (by *Godspell* writer Stephen Schwartz). The film's main problem is how it reflects a view of religion as magical, not everyday.



Moses and his people come to meet with Pharoah in Egypt.

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J. Lorne Peachey

The Mennonite church and homosexuality (1)

Working out our salvation with fear and trembling

This week's *The Mennonite* is the first of two consecutive issues dealing with the subject of homosexuality. Based on numerous conversations and letters I've had since this publication began almost a year ago now, I think I can safely predict the responses:

"Oh, no, not again!"

"Finally!"

Those responses illustrate just how divided we are in the church about this issue. Some believe noncelibate gays and lesbians can be members of the Mennonite church; many more believe this is against the will of God.

Almost all of us wish the subject would go away. It won't. I've come to believe that, like it or not, it is precisely on this issue that our generation of Christians will be judged on how we put our faith into practice and how serious we are about being disciples. For that reason, it is important that we understand what the issue is and what the Mennonite church has said is inappropriate for a Christian.

The issue is not about homosexual orientation. As John D. Roth points out in his article, both denominational statements on human sexuality—Saskatoon '86 of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Purdue '87 of the Mennonite Church—are about behavior, not orientation.

How we do our talking may be as critical as the answers to which it leads us. Until we come to tears, whatever our decision, we will not be within the will of God.

Nor is the issue about promiscuity. In his article next week, Roth notes the common myth in our society that all gays and lesbians are promiscuous sexual predators. For the church to play into that myth is wrong. We must get rid of the notion that those who disagree with the church's position on homosexuality are advocating a promiscuous lifestyle for gays and lesbians—an undercurrent I hear all too often in our discussions about this issue. The church does not condone promiscuous sexual behavior for heterosexuals, and it does not for homosexuals.

No, the question about which we disagree is this: Can the church accept as Christian behavior monogamous, same-sex relationships?

The General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church and, more recently, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada have all said no. The basis on which they made those decisions is outlined by Roth in his two-part article. This week Roth deals with two authorities: Scripture and tradition. Next week he deals with what he calls two "lesser" authorities: personal experience and sexual rights.

For the church throughout history, Scripture and tradition have always had the most weight in making ethical decisions. But the church considers personal experience important enough that all the denominational statements on human sexuality also say that we must continue to dialogue with those who disagree. God may be working through personal experiences to lead us to change. We don't know that yet, so we must keep on talking.

Our world is watching us like a hawk on this one. In North American society today, the issue of homosexuality is divisive and volatile, leading to anger, hate, even murder. Sadly, too many of the same reactions are also found in the church. At least I've seen much more anger than tears in our discussions about homosexuality. But until we come to tears, whatever our decision, we will not be within the will of God. Too often our attitudes give us away as more human than divine.

This is an uncomfortable position for Mennonites—and for the entire Christian church in North America, for that matter. We need to make decisions on tough issues—decisions that affect lives and eternal destinies. But we must also be aware that how we make those decisions has as much or more to say about our faith and its meaning for our lives than do the actual decisions themselves.

Thus we can only approach the subject of homosexuality and the decisions surrounding it with humility, contriteness and a sense of being human. When it comes to this issue, the Mennonite church must—in the words of the apostle Paul—work out its salvation "with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).—*jlp*

the Mennonite

January 26, 1999

new students same mission

Franklin Breckenridge (left), a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, is also an African Methodist Episcopal pastor.

4 Clarity, charity and compassion

6 Toward common ground

9 Gay or straight, 'promiscuity is sinful'

16 The work to which we have been called

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Finding favor in the footnote

I appreciated and was encouraged by the Jan. 5 editorial ("The Footnote for 2 Timothy 1:12b"). We Christians too often co-opt the lack-of-success-equals-failure mentality of our age for our faith walk. But God loves our efforts, understands the difficult challenge of "seeing through a glass darkly" and is not looking for us to claim, or even focus on, success in our faith walk. Paul's Christianity is clear about not being caught up in the tough and brutal success-or-failure culture: "I plant, Apollos waters, but it is God who gives the growth." What a gentle metaphor: simple gardeners in God's kingdom.

I value *The Mennonite* because it too encourages a focus on effort rather than admonishment or condemnation of perceived failures. If, having made a mistake, we can stand in front of Christ and not be afraid, we should offer each other no less. Thanks for your persistence in that effort.—*Christine Thomson, Phoenixville, Pa.*

I share the editorial's feelings about 2 Timothy 1:12b. It is worth noting that in the previous part of that chapter, Paul admonishes Timothy to be diligent in witnessing to the truth of the gospel, for God has not given him a spirit of fear. I very much believe that God, the Holy Spirit, is working throughout the world much more and in more ways than we realize. —*Chris Wickey, Engadine, Mich.*

Anxiety attacks and attacking anxiety

It's difficult to imagine that one can add anything to the already prodigious amount of writing on the subject of integration and homosexuality. But I would like to offer three observations from a systemic perspective which may be relevant to the current discussion.

1. Change almost always produces anxiety. The proposed merger of three Mennonite bodies, each with its own organizational structure and culture, is a massive effort at change.

2. The identified issue are almost never the real issue. The identified stumbling block in the otherwise smooth path to integration is apparently homosexuality. But I believe that the major issue, wonderfully summarized by Rich Preheim, is "who decides who can be in the new church" ("Integration Traveled Rocky Road in 1998," Dec. 29, 1998). It is, in other words, a question more of polity (where authority is lodged) than of hermeneutics (how we interpret Scripture). To talk of polity is to talk of power, which creates further anxiety.

3. The ability of leaders to manage their own anxiety is one of the main determinants of a successful organizational change process. I was encouraged to read the interview with general secretaries Helmut Harder, George Stoltzfus and Jim Schrag regarding their perspectives on the integration process ("Who Are These Guys?" Dec. 29, 1998). Jim Schrag's ability to name uncertainty—and apparently to manage it—is a hopeful sign and an indication to me that this massive change effort may be successful after all.

What remains is for the rest of us to learn to manage our own anxiety around the integration process and to respond creatively rather than to react unhelpfully.—*Dave Brubaker, Casa Grande, Ariz.*

Consultation intercession

I am taking seriously the advice in the Dec. 8, 1998, editorial ("An In-Turn Take-Out Would Have Given Us the Hammer, But I Couldn't Get My Second Rock Over the Hog Line"). I have placed that issue with my Bible and devotional materials in order to pray daily for the March consultation on church membership and homosexuality. It is time to lay down our pens or turn off our typewriters, computers, email and fax machines and pray.

I will not be praying that one side wins over the other. I will simply pray that the Holy Spirit will guide our leaders to answers which will be satisfactory. I wonder what could happen if 50,000 or 100,000 church members would pray for God's guidance in the planned consultation. It could perhaps lead us through integration and on to reaching beyond our borders in an unprecedented manner.

May God be with all those involved in the work of integration, and may the Holy Spirit lead those involved in the consultation in March. —*Kenneth Cressman, New Hamburg, Ont.*

Keen listening, sensible talking

After reading Tobin Miller Shearer's "Pearls, Swine and 'Beloved' " (Dec. 29, 1998), I agree that we should be ready to speak out. I teach in an all-black, rural Mississippi public school. It is expected that I give an answer to serious questions about why white folks do certain things. I believe that silence often encourages racists of any race to prevail. Entering into meaningful conversations can bear witness to Jesus' love. Effective dismantling of racism requires a lot of keen listening and some sensible talking.—*Larry Miller, Macon, Miss.*

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readers say

Sex, love and companionship

Good things can become sin if they are no longer seen as a means to an end but become an end in themselves. The list of sins in Colossians 3:5 illustrates this. Money and possessions are necessary for our life on earth. They are to be used, not only for our own support and the support of others, but also to help the work of the church in extending the kingdom of God. But if money and possessions are no longer a means to that end and become an end in themselves, they condemn us.

Where personal gratification is the only goal of intercourse, the means of procreation is reduced to recreation, or an end in itself. The holy union of husband and wife is profaned by casual liaisons with any consenting partner. Since homosexual genital activity can never be procreative, it is always an end in itself.

May we study the Scriptures and listen to the Holy Spirit to know how to use the good things God has given us to glorify and worship him.—*Joseph J. Voegtlin, Tofield, Alta.*

Both heterosexuals and homosexuals long for human companionship and love. That's normal. But we have grown up with such false ideas about gays that some people class them with criminals, rapists, pedophiles and sex addicts. This is hateful and hurtful. Though it may take time to get used to the idea of two Christian gays in a lifelong covenant relationship with God and each other, this ideal helps homosexuals mature spiritually, emotionally and responsibly in the same way that faithfulness to a life partner helps heterosexuals mature in marriage. We should not let ignorance of biology or of Bible times and languages or fear of differences exclude Christians who are in a covenant relationship that is part of growing in God.
—*Esther Bohn Groves, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover photo by Tyler Klassen

Clarity, charit

Why the Mennonite church does not regard same-sex marriages as a Christian option—part 2

by John D. Roth

Scripture and tradition are not the only authorities to which one can appeal in the argument over homosexuality. There are at least two other sources of authority that I want to address and challenge, not because they are always wrong or completely inappropriate but because in many discussions they seem to enter as a kind of trump card that will somehow supersede the authority of Scripture and Christian tradition. These are the authority of personal experience and the right to sexual expression.

Personal experience: Frequently I have heard variations of an argument that goes something like this: If your child were gay, you would think differently about this. Or this: How can you as a married heterosexual tell homosexuals how to live their lives?

Personal experience is a natural and necessary part of any discussion of morality and ethics; circumstances and context are indeed part of the framework for making ethical decisions. But in Christian ethics, you do not derive moral or ethical principles from the "givenness" of the context; you don't base what ought to be on what is. If, for example, I discover that the uncle of a friend was killed in Desert Storm and my friend is strongly considering joining the Marines, I should be sensitive in my language and gentle in my spirit. But there is no reason why those facts alone should suddenly imply that pacifism is no longer a tenable Christian position.

> Based on the messages from our culture, we can easily assume that there is a necessary and inevitable link between desire and deed, between impulse and action, between orientation and behavior.

Frequently—though not always—the appeal to personal experience is simply another way of defending radical individual autonomy, the modern, "liberated" self that is freed from any "meta-narrative" (like Scripture) that can stand in moral judgment of one's options. But if you really mean that personal experience is an absolute authority in itself, then you also are granting other people—chauvinists and homophobes, for example—the complete freedom to act in whatever ways their personal experience might happen to lead them.

To argue primarily from the basis of personal experience, it seems to me, is the end of the conversation about ethics. Part of the essential mission of the church is to give structure to the meaning of Christian discipleship. Its authority to bind and to loose will inevitably be in some tension with personal experience. In the end, personal experiences cannot arbitrate morality for the Christian community.

Sexual rights: Another form of authority that often emerges in the discussion of homosexuality comes out of the broader cultural milieu in which the debate occurs. This is the authority of sexual rights, an argument that rejects the church's call for chastity as cruel and dehumanizing.

We live in a culture preoccupied—indeed virtually obsessed—with sexuality. In the mass media, Freud and Dr. Ruth have won the day. Expressions of sexuality—be they pornographic, erotic, commercial, romantic, discussions of technique, debates over gender identity, demands for fulfillment—suffuse popular culture and, by extension, our notions of individual identity. In our culture, sex—and especially genital sex—has become the primary focus of human happiness and fulfillment.

In a subtle but powerful way, this preoccupation with sexuality has made the option of chastity almost unthinkable. Based on the messages from our culture, we can easily assume that there is a necessary and inevitable link between desire and deed, between impulse and action, between orientation and behavior. If you are inclined to express yourself sexually and you deny that to yourself, then you are likely a candidate for psychotherapy because there is no worse fate for modern Western humans than sexual desire that is somehow repressed.

We can also too easily assume, based on the messages from our culture, that genital intercourse is the highest and best and fullest expression of human intimacy. Note how many movies and sit-coms assume that intimacy is a prelude to what really matters: sexual intercourse. The insinuation—not only for gays and lesbians but to all single people—is that you are somehow not fully human unless you've had sex.

and compassion

To both of these assumptions the Christian church responds with an alternative vision, a counter-story. Within the Christian community, true fulfillment does not assume that desire must always find expression in deed. In fact, the Christian community becomes a witness to the world precisely to the degree that it helps people—gays and straights alike—become free from slavery to desire.

Furthermore, within the Christian community, genuine intimacy is not to be confused with sexual intercourse. There are many deep and fulfilling expressions of intimacy and affection and vulnerability and love between individuals that stop short of genital intercourse. Within the church, chastity is not only a human possibility but is recognized in Scripture as a spiritual calling, at least for some people. In sum, the appeal to sexual rights, understandable and widespread as it may be in the popular culture, should not be regarded as a source of moral authority for the church's understanding of sexual ethics.

At the same time, however, I also need to acknowledge that many of the 92 percent of church members who think homosexual acts are "always wrong" (as reported in 1991 in *The Mennonite Mosaic* by Kauffman and Driedger) have also been deeply shaped by the prevailing assumptions of popular culture. Far too many in the church have had their attitudes and assumptions regarding homosexuality shaped by the smug arrogance often associated with the religious right, an attitude that depicts all gays and lesbians as promiscuous sexual predators, consumed by their own lust and probably carrying the AIDS virus. Such attitudes in the church are mean-spirited and wrong. They are contrary to basic Christian decency, and they violate the spirit and letter of Scripture, our Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition and the recent statements of the church. Sadly, despite all the appeals to "loving dialogue," the fact remains that the church in general is not a welcoming place for people of homosexual orientation.

What does the future hold? Is there any way around the impasse? Must the discussion end with attrition or exhaustion? By disfellowshipping each other? By still more ongoing, seething resentment? I hope not. None of these options seems appropriate for the church. I conclude by confessing that I do not know what the future holds for the church on this issue.

But in spite of the confusion and tension that seem to prevail right now, I am convinced that Christian faith calls all of us to be open and expectant, anticipating solutions to human disagreements that come in ways we don't expect. When all the doors seem closed, God can open a window. Are we looking for that window? Are we ready to stand in its light if God's illuminating wisdom should suddenly shine through and pierce our current darkness?

Until that light shines more fully, my hope is for a church that is genuinely open to people who have gay or lesbian orientations; a church that will recognize them fully as children of God, created in the image of God for a divine purpose; a church that will celebrate and use their gifts, not because they are gay but because they wish to be part of the fellowship of Christ; a church that is a safe and open place for gays to share how their lives have been shaped by their sexual orientation.

Sadly, despite all the appeals to "loving dialogue," the fact remains that the church in general is not a welcoming place for people of homosexual orientation.

And it is also my hope that gays and lesbians will—in the spirit of Scripture, Christian tradition and our best current understanding of God's will—covenant with the church and with each other to live holy lives: lives that are rich and full, lives filled with emotional and spiritual intimacy and, at the same time, lives that are committed to sexual abstinence and celibacy.

May God grant all of us clarity, charity and compassion as the discussion continues.

John D. Roth is professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College as well as editor of The Mennonite Quarterly Review. *This two-part article is adapted from a presentation he made in a Goshen College chapel in February 1998. Part one appeared in last week's issue of* The Mennonite.

Toward common ground

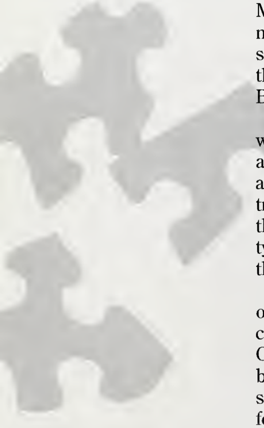
Integrity requires that heterosexual and homosexual men and women acknowledge their sinfulness as a common condition.

by Martin W. Lehman

First, some background: I was born of Mennonite parents in the conservative Mennonite community of rural Franklin County, Pa. My father was a pastor, evangelist and Bible teacher. I attended Eastern Mennonite High School and College in Harrisonburg, Va. I also served in Civilian Public Service camps during World War II.

Later I became a pastor in Florida under Lancaster Mennonite Conference and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities. I was the first resident bishop for the Lancaster Conference churches in the Southeast. Later I became the first general secretary of the Southeast Mennonite Conference.

One long-time friend felt like throwing me out of his house when he learned of my views concerning the church and homosexuality. Others who looked to me as a teacher and bishop, a pillar of the faith, are now disillusioned with me.



My churchwide service has included two terms on Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. I also served several terms as a member of the Listening Committee for Homosexual and Lesbian Concerns, appointed to that group by the Mennonite Church General Board.

Now, at 72, I am retired from all that. I watch as Mennonites struggle to understand and accept the movement of God's Spirit among them. This is particularly true with the troublesome issue of homosexuality. And I find that with my views, I am now one of a minority, under suspicion from much of the rest of the church.

One long-time friend felt like throwing me out of his house when he learned of my views concerning the church and homosexuality. Others who looked to me as a teacher and bishop, a pillar of the faith, are now disillusioned with me. This is painful for them and for me. They think I have been duped by liberal scholars or by the gay community. They think I no longer believe the Bible to be the Word of God.

I protest. I do believe that the Bible is God's Word. I value scholars and their work. They read the Bible in a language that I cannot. It is not their findings that have changed me. The words of Leviticus, Romans and other pertinent Scriptures may remain as they are, and I will still believe as I believe. Why? The years of listening to the testimonies of believing and hurting gays and lesbians have had a profound effect on me.

I define a believer as one who loves Jesus, trusts him as Savior, accepts him as Lord and is committed to the church. I assert two basic premises: (1) that all heterosexual believers sin and (2) that there are many sinning homosexual men and women who believe. I grieve because these two groups of sinning believers do not yet know they are one, dwelling safely on common ground.

My understanding of the common ground begins in Romans 1–3, where Paul concludes that "all have sinned." Integrity requires that heterosexual and homosexual men and women acknowledge their sinfulness as a common condition. We will be uncomfortable with each other unless we all come to God as sinners in need of grace.

Grace saves believers by giving instant attention to us when we fail. This constant care is free to all believers, homosexual and heterosexual alike. When we need help, we are invited to come boldly to the throne of grace. When we don't know how to pray, the Holy Spirit prays for us according to the will of God. When we fall short of God's purpose for us, Jesus, the great High Priest, pleads with God on our behalf. When we sin, the blood of Jesus cleanses us daily. These securities guarantee a safe common ground for believing heterosexuals and homosexual men and women.

Many believing heterosexuals who sin do not concede that God's redeeming grace is shown to sinning homosexual men and women who believe. This heterosexual majority is willing to let the world see a scandal that is more disgraceful than the scandal of too much grace. It is the scandal of a church dividing.

Fear of too much grace grieves the Holy Spirit, who is both the agent and the seal of the transformation. This long-term activity of

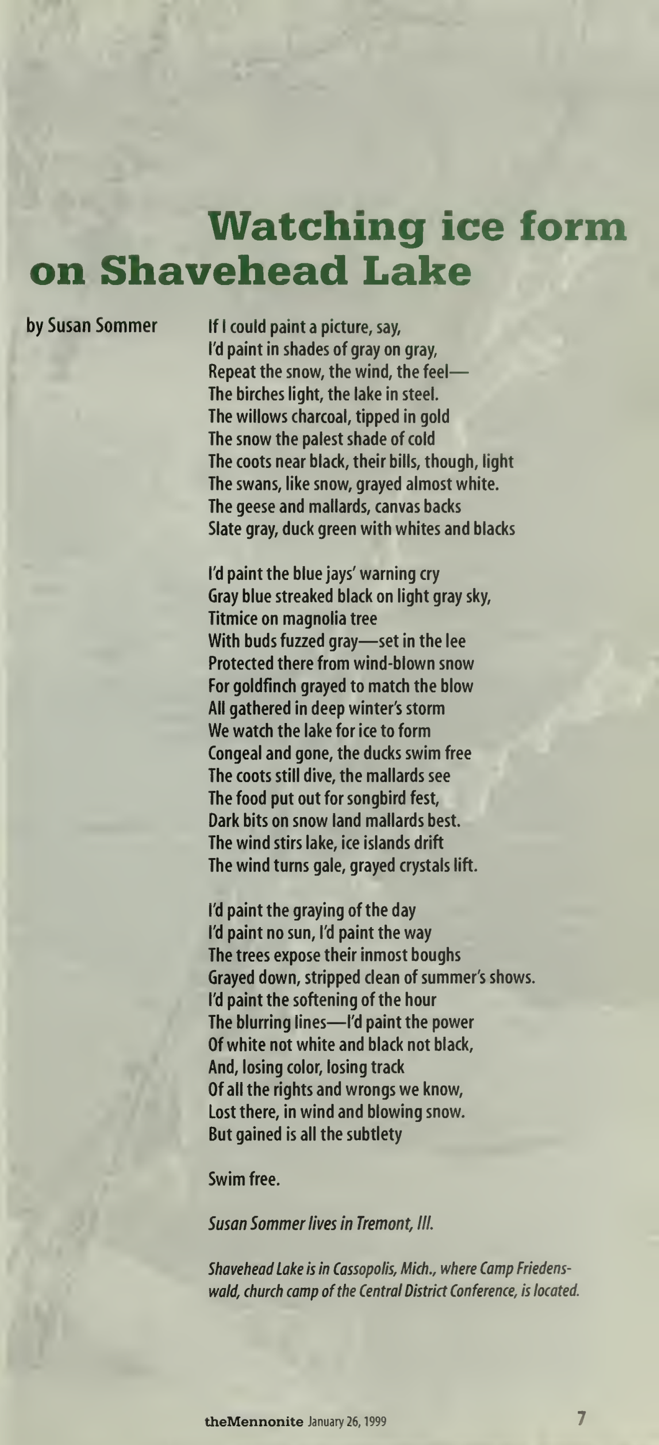
God within us is common ground for both believing heterosexual men and women and believing gays and lesbians. We dwell there in peace.

Many of us wish the homosexual issue would just go away. "Let's take a vote," we say, "and decide the issue once and for all so we can get on with the business of the church." We fail to recognize that dealing with the homosexual issue is the business of the church. To rely on the ways of the world—like an up or down vote or some other parliamentary maneuver—to make the church's business go away will not work no matter which side "wins."

How wonderful it will be when all God's people dwell in peace on common ground and feast humbly and joyfully at the Communion table. Then the world will see and believe that we are indeed a people of vision, healing and hope.

Martin W. Lehman, Sarasota, Fla., is a retired minister who now teaches Sunday school at the Bahia Vista Mennonite Church. "Sixty-two years ago I promised at baptism to give and receive counsel," he says, "and this article is an attempt to be faithful to that promise."

To rely on the ways of the world—like an up or down vote or some other parliamentary maneuver—to make the church's business go away will not work no matter which side "wins."



Rohn Engh

Watching ice form on Shavehead Lake

by Susan Sommer

If I could paint a picture, say,
I'd paint in shades of gray on gray,
Repeat the snow, the wind, the feel—
The birches light, the lake in steel.
The willows charcoal, tipped in gold
The snow the palest shade of cold
The coots near black, their bills, though, light
The swans, like snow, grayed almost white.
The geese and mallards, canvas backs
Slate gray, duck green with whites and blacks

I'd paint the blue jays' warning cry
Gray blue streaked black on light gray sky,
Titmice on magnolia tree
With buds fuzzed gray—set in the lee
Protected there from wind-blown snow
For goldfinch grayed to match the blow
All gathered in deep winter's storm
We watch the lake for ice to form
Congeal and gone, the ducks swim free
The coots still dive, the mallards see
The food put out for songbird fest,
Dark bits on snow land mallards best.
The wind stirs lake, ice islands drift
The wind turns gale, grayed crystals lift.

I'd paint the graying of the day
I'd paint no sun, I'd paint the way
The trees expose their inmost boughs
Grayed down, stripped clean of summer's shows.
I'd paint the softening of the hour
The blurring lines—I'd paint the power
Of white not white and black not black,
And, losing color, losing track
Of all the rights and wrongs we know,
Lost there, in wind and blowing snow.
But gained is all the subtlety

Swim free.

Susan Sommer lives in Tremont, Ill.

Shavehead Lake is in Cassopolis, Mich., where Camp Friedenswald, church camp of the Central District Conference, is located.

Fewer Mennonite, more non-Mennonite students at AMBS, EMS

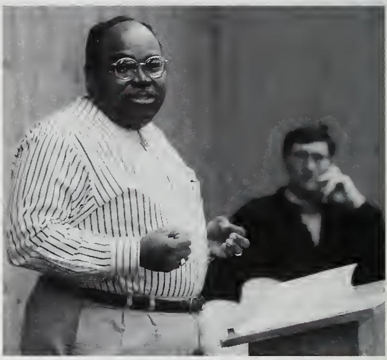


Photo by Tyler Klassen

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary student Franklin Breckenridge, an African Methodist Episcopal pastor from Elkhart, Ind., makes a class presentation. Forty-three percent of the students at the two U.S. Mennonite seminaries are not Mennonite.

If Lillian French had gone to Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS), she would be in the majority of students. That's because she is not Mennonite. But then neither is 53 percent of the enrollment at the Harrisonburg, Va., school.

But French, a United Methodist pastor from Jackson, Mich., is at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS). Thirty-seven percent of the students at the Elkhart, Ind., school aren't Mennonite either.

"My incoming knowledge of Mennonites was probably 0 percent. ... You were Amish to me," French says. "So I was quite surprised and pleased to see you welcome other people."

Those "other people"—from Apostolic to United Church of Christ—have been essential to both AMBS and EMS. While the number of non-Mennonite students has risen slightly over the last five years, the number of Mennonite students has fluctuated wildly at AMBS and plummeted 37 percent at EMS (see below).

While the presence of non-Mennonite students is welcome at the seminaries, the decrease in Mennonite students is cause for concern. "What's happening right now is very much of a wake-up call," says EMS dean George R. Brunk III.

Seminary officials suggest a variety of reasons for the decline. Brunk wonders about a "spiritual laxness in the church that affects people's sense of call." He and other seminary officials believe there is less encouragement by church members for candidates to consider seminary. "Why aren't conferences and congregations tapping people on the shoulders?" asks AMBS dean Willard Swartley. "My sense is that it is no longer happening."

Among other possible factors for the decline are vocational changes. Brunk says some fields which had been the domain of the seminaries and the church, such as peacemaking, have become more available for study and jobs in the secular arena. Yet another suggested factor is localism—Mennonites choosing not to pack and move to Elkhart or Harrisonburg but rather taking classes at a seminary closer to where they live.

But localism has also worked for the two Mennonite seminaries. The non-Mennonites who attend do so, at least in part, because the schools are close. And in the case of the United Methodists, both AMBS and EMS have been approved by the denomination for some 20 years for training its pastors.

Despite the changes in their student bodies, officials from both seminaries emphasize that the schools are still Mennonite and that they have put little if any effort into attracting non-Mennonite students. "We have not weakened the [Mennonite] composition of the faculty and staff," Brunk says. "And our curriculum has not been changing over this time."

But changes are still evident due to the non-Mennonite students. AMBS professor Gayle Gerber Koontz cites her course, "Theology of the Church," which covers topics such as baptism and discipline.

"I don't think I've taught it differently," she says. "What might be different is the discussion. I think that can be energizing, actually, and the Mennonite students need to come up with reasons for why they believe what they believe."

Says French, "They are just being exposed to a little bit more of another denomination's perspective."—*Rich Preheim*

Seminary enrollment ups and downs

	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
	Menno	Other	Menno	Other	Menno	Other	Menno	Other	Menno	Other
AMBS	**112**	**43**	**131**	**38**	**146**	**48**	**153**	**64**	**109**	**64**
EMS	**70**	**47**	**70**	**41**	**57**	**51**	**62**	**48**	**44**	**50**
TOTAL	**182**	**90**	**201**	**79**	**203**	**99**	**215**	**112**	**153**	**114**

Perceptions and reality

While the two U.S. Mennonite seminaries staunchly emphasize their Mennonitism, there are fears that perceptions could be eroded by the growing percentages of students from other denominations.

Willard Swartley, dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), says he has encountered that sentiment among constituency.

"Do we want to give to a school that is educating so many Methodists? That has been raised by a donor," he says.

Both AMBS and Eastern Mennonite Seminary have been approved by the United Methodist Church for training its pastors, and AMBS particularly has seen a jump in Methodist students in the last several years. "We don't advertise, but they come," Swartley says.—*Rich Preheim*

Gay or straight, 'promiscuity is sinful'

Congregations which welcome homosexuals say same standards apply as to heterosexuals

Like probably all Mennonite congregations, Southside Fellowship in Elkhart, Ind., believes sexual activity is meant for a committed, long-term relationship. For most congregations, that means marriage between two people of opposite genders. But Southside pastor Jeni Hiett Umble also says sexual activity can also be acceptable between people of the same gender.

"I expect heterosexuals to confine their sexual relations to a monogamous relationship. I would expect homosexuals to do the same," Umble says. "I don't think there are special rules for one group or the other."

Stereotypes may paint homosexuality as synonymous with promiscuity. But an informal survey of congregations which accept noncelibate gays and lesbians shows they apply the same standards to homosexuals as Christianity has applied to heterosexuals.

Regardless of the gender of one's partner, says Stan Smucker, pastor of Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church, "Promiscuity is wrong and sinful."

Double standard? The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church statements on human sexuality and the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective state that sexual activity is reserved for heterosexual marriage, which means that premarital and extramarital sex are inappropriate, as is homosexual sex. While sexual activity between people of the same gender has become a test for membership in some conferences, homosexual supporters point out that premarital and extramarital sex are seemingly not issues for heterosexual membership.

"The fact that we're singled out for special attention is something of a strange feature of our times," says Richard Lichty, pastor of Germantown Mennonite Church in Philadelphia.

Even though they preach and teach monogamy and celibacy, Lichty and other pastors are not naive. They cannot deny that in their congregations are single people, both heterosexual and homosexual, who are not celibate. "I'm sure a number of [heterosexual] people we have counseled for premarital counseling have been sexually active," Smucker says.

"We don't ask questions of heterosexuals when they join the church, so we don't [ask] homosexuals," he says.

When discussing premarital and extramarital relations, one issue is that homosexual couples, unlike heterosexuals, cannot be joined in a way recognized by the law and the church at large. Therefore, any sexual activity by homosexuals is outside of marriage.

But this doesn't mean two homosexuals cannot have a long-term, monogamous relationship, akin to heterosexual marriage, where sexual activity would be appropriate, says Steve Ortman Goering, pastor of Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church. "The underlying assumption is that there would be a significant relationship with one person," he says.

Lichty points out that a number of homosexual couples in his congregation have had public commitment ceremonies, all of them before he arrived at Germantown in 1997.

Community issues: Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concern's Supportive Congregations Network is an organization of 13 U.S. and Canadian Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations which accept noncelibate homosexuals as members. Neither BMC nor SCN has a position on monogamy and celibacy.

"In keeping with our Anabaptist beliefs, BMC/SCN feels discernment in matters of personal ethics is best done from within a community of mutual accountability and respect," says BMC executive director Jim Sauder.

Like other congregations, those which accept noncelibate homosexuals have dealt with appropriate sexual activity in a variety of ways. "If we understand behavior is wrong or ill-advised, ... we try to address that," Goering says. "What we try to do is pre-empt that from the pulpit."

Many congregations see those issues as part of greater issues of appropriate interpersonal conduct. "If you prostitute yourself, you can do it many more ways than just sexual," Lichty says.

Proper relationships is one of the focuses of Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship's covenant statement, says member Becky Kurtz, even though it does not specifically mention sexual activity. "Certainly it would make sense if it would include sexual relationships as well," she says.

Most, if not all, congregations which accept noncelibate homosexuals do not have written statements on sexual conduct.

Lichty maintains that a person's sexuality is more than just a bedroom activity; it also includes emotions, intellect, personality and other attributes. "It would be nice if we could address that, talk about the larger issues," he says, "rather than who is attracted to whom."

—Rich Preheim

Cancer rallies retirement center

Linda Brown's job caused her to lose her hair. But not because of stress or worry.

Brown works at Frederick Mennonite Community, a retirement center at Frederick, Pa. When she heard last fall that Jodeci, daughter of fellow employee James Johnson, had Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma and would have to undergo treatment, Brown cut her long hair and donated it to Locks of Love, which makes wigs for children who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy.

Brown's action has been one of many ways the Johnsons have been supported by Frederick Mennonite Community. Employees and residents have contributed for gas, tolls and parking for the family's 70-mile trips to the hospital in Philadelphia, plus other efforts.

"The pastor of Hopewell Mennonite Church [Pottstown, Pa.] has been a regular visitor," James Johnson says. "We don't belong to his church, but pastor Ken [Kirk] and his wife, Sandy, come every week to visit and pray."

Jodeci is continuing her treatments.

New York man answers second call to serve to direct hurricane response in Honduras

AKRON, Pa.—Last November, as Hurricane Mitch forged mercilessly through Honduras, David Martin decided that the needs of the storm victims outweighed those of the 75 dairy cows on his farm in Clymer, N.Y. But he had to change his mind to come to that conclusion.

Martin, who served in Honduras with Mennonite Central Committee from 1986 to 1989, had been contentedly pursuing a 10-year commitment to farming when he received a phone call from Linda Shelly, director of MCC's Latin America programs. She invited him to consider returning to Honduras to help coordinate MCC's post-hurricane relief efforts.

Martin initially turned down the offer, intent on finishing his 10-year plan and citing various farm-related obligations. But four days later, as the severity of the situation in Honduras became clear, he reconsidered.

"I knew the cows would have to go, whether I served two weeks or two years," Martin says. "And if I got rid of them, I could be available for some time."

He then began to prepare for his Dec. 29, 1998, departure. A local farmer agreed to rent Martin's land during his two- to three-year term, and he sold his entire herd to a Wisconsin buyer. He sold one item to a local farmer, who insisted on giving him more than the agreed-upon amount.

Though some might consider his decision brash, Martin sees it differently. "[Everyone] responds in a way that's most appropriate: giving money or material resources," he says. "But for me it became apparent that, knowing the language and culture, I could be very useful there."

Since his first MCC term, Martin had purchased his family's farm and enjoyed the work. But by spring 2000, he anticipated moving out of farming and pursuing another career or further education.

"I love working with dairy cattle, but it's very confining" says Martin, a member of Beaver Dam Mennonite Church in Corry, Pa. "Over the last nine years, MCC opportunities came up that I regretted not being able to be a part of."

While much of his role is being determined on site, Martin will initially work in the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa, coordinating work teams in some of the hardest-hit areas. He will also assist Honduran church partners to develop and implement a long-term development plan. As other MCC volunteers arrive, Martin may relocate to the northern coastal region of La Ceiba to work in soil conservation, help replant crops and reclaim land covered by mud and silt.

MCC is recruiting additional volunteers to serve in Honduras, including at least one more person with construction and agriculture skills. *—Delphine Martin of MCC News Service*

Hondurans get tractors from MCC

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has purchased three tractors to assist hurricane relief efforts in Honduras. The Case IH tractors will be used by the Mennonite Social Action Commission of the Honduran Mennonite Church.

The tractors were purchased at a reduced cost from Binkley & Hurst, a Lititz, Pa., implement dealer. Two of its employees will travel to Honduras in late January to prepare the tractors for use. MCC will pay for the trip while Binkley & Hurst will pay half the employees' salary during their weeklong stay.*—MCC News Service*

Forgiveness key to peace, professor says

EMM photo by: Dale D. Gehman

As such profoundly unjust people, we live off of forgiveness.

—Miroslav Volf

SALUNGA, Pa.—Want peace? Work for justice. So says current Mennothink. But a Croatian theologian challenged that position at a Jan. 8 consultation at Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) headquarters in Salunga, which drew 70 Mennonite church leaders and scholars.

Work for justice, yes. Expect it, no, according to Miroslav Volf, who said, "To have a just world, you would have to create it anew." Rather, those seeking peace may find it by practicing forgiveness. "As such profoundly unjust people, we live off of forgiveness," he said.

Volf, who hails from Osijek, Croatia, recently began a theology professorship at Yale Divinity School. EMM global consultant David Shenk said he initiated the consultation for "a cluster of us who walk within a tradition of peacemaking but perhaps sometimes because of that very tradition become blinded to the wonder of it all: the nature of the gospel and the Trinity as speaking to what it means to be truly a people of peace."

Volf's presentation was grounded in his understanding of the Trinity. "The kind of god you worship will have ultimate impact on the kind of person you are," he said. "So the Trinity somehow defines and impacts us. The doctrine of the Trinity must lie at the center of our social vision."

Like the Trinity, "human community is not simply a collection of independent selves," he said. "All divine persons [in the Trinity] interpenetrate each other, and yet they don't cease to be distinct persons."

Also sponsoring the consultation were Eastern Mennonite University, Franconia Conference, Lancaster Conference, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation.*—Kristin Oberholtzer of EMM News Service*

Workers return with children to war zone

ELKHART, Ind.—With two young children, Steve and Sheryl Martin are making a home in a country torn by war.

The MBM workers returned to Kabul, Afghanistan, in November, 1998—this time with an infant son, Micah. They also have a 3-year-old daughter, Sara, who has been evacuated with her parents a number of times because of fighting in the country.

The Martins first moved to Kabul in 1991, and both worked with an interdenominational nongovernmental organization. Steve continues to work as the NGO's finance director. Sheryl has made plans to work part-time as a nurse in a maternal health program and focus more on community health.

The Martins were in the United States when parts of Afghanistan were hit by U.S. missiles in retaliation for attacks on U.S. embassies in East Africa. The NGO for which Steve worked set up a temporary office in Peshawar, Pakistan. Tension also has been high between Iran and the Taliban, a group which started as a student revolution and has taken over virtually all of Afghanistan.

Although it is difficult because of government restrictions in the Islamic country, the couple is able to interact with the Afghan people. Sheryl tries to identify with women as much as possible through her dress. Afghan women are required to wear full-length clothing and cover their faces. Some Western media reports have focused on the treatment of Afghan women.

"Some women have benefited from the Taliban taking power. Others have lost jobs," Sheryl says. "The security that the Taliban brings is something a large group of the population has enjoyed."

Despite the changes in Afghanistan, the Martins, with their children, are committed to remaining in the Islamic country, which they see as less volatile than when they arrived.

"We've sort of grown with the situation," Steve says, noting there is concern but that the agency he works with is careful about putting people in dangerous situations.
—Marshall V. King for MBM News Service

We've sort of grown with the situation.

—Steve Martin

Amor Viviente founder dies at 56 in Illinois

PEORIA, Ill.—Ed King, a Peoria pastor who 25 years ago helped start the Honduras-based Amor Viviente Mennonite-affiliated denomination, died Jan. 8 of hepatits at the age of 56.

King and his wife, Gloria, were serving in Honduras with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) in the 1970s, organizing a charismatic youth ministry in the capital city of Tegucigalpa. The Kings' ministry, out of which Amor Viviente emerged in 1974, started with a coffee shop and counseling and eventually produced weekend rallies, a Christian bookstore and an alcohol rehabilitation center.

Amor Viviente, a member of Mennonite World Conference, today has 44 congregations and about 6,500 members. The church has also planted congregations in the United States, with some help from EMM. In 1985 in New Orleans, King started the first Amor Viviente congregation in the United States, which he pastored until 1989. At the time of his death, he was pastor of Living Love Ministries in Peoria, the first bilingual Amor Viviente congregation.

Before going to Honduras in 1969, the Kings served with Mennonite Central Committee in Bolivia from 1965 to 1968. He also pastored Trinity Mennonite Church in Morton, Ill., from 1989 to 1990 and Calvary Mennonite Church in Washington, Ill., from 1990 to 1995.

MCC photo by Mark Beach

Seeds of recovery

Mennonite Central Committee worker Selina Aktar distributes seeds to Bangladeshi farmers trying to recover from last summer's devastating floods, which left 10 million people homeless and destroyed 2 million acres of farmland. MCC is supplying 10,000 famillies with seeds for wheat, potatoes, corn, radishes and other vegetables. MCC has already provided medical supplies to 40 orphanages and clinics and helped provide 6,700 metric tons of wheat for food-for-work projects. Future plans call for assisting nearly 2,000 families in rebuilding or repairing their homes.

by the way ...

According to one estimate, the Old Order Amish population, now about 150,000 in the United States and Canada, could reach 25 million by 2150.—*Family Life*

Service team raising funds for Colombian center

CACHIPAY, Colombia—As part of Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) Youth Venture program, seven teenagers and their two leaders spent two weeks in August at a retreat center owned by the Colombian Mennonite Church. That same team, now scattered around the world, is attempting to raise $15,000 to help the Colombian Mennonites.

The retreat center, known as La Finca El Recreo, owns a van in extreme disrepair. "The only thing that will fix this van is a new one," says team leader Christy Risser.

Team members are raising funds for the van in their home congregations. Risser, who recently preached at Wood Green Mennonite Church in London, England, asked that her stipend be donated to the cause. Contributions have also come from MBM workers Tom and Disa Rutschman. Tom grew up in Colombia, the son of Commission on Overseas Mission workers Laverne and Harriet Rutschman.—*MBM News Service*

Director of retired people's organization to retire

ELKHART, Ind.—Barbara Reber, the only executive director the Mennonite Association of Retired Persons (MARP) has had in its 10 years, will become a retired person herself on June 30. She announced her plans at the board of directors recent biennial meeting.

Reber came to MARP after serving as a missionary in Japan, vice president of marketing for a Chicago bank and executive director of the Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church. MARP has 3,600 members in six states and conducts the Service Opportunities for Older People program. Today 132 SOOP volunteers serve in 51 locations in the United States and 12 in Canada.

Houses Against Hunger help fill MCC coffers

LANCASTER, Pa.—The construction and sale of more than 60 houses in the United States and Canada over the past 12 years has raised nearly $5 million for Mennonite Central Committee through the agency's House Against Hunger Program. The most recent house, near Lancaster, was sold this month for $154,000. Twenty houses have been built and sold in the last decade in the eastern United States for a total of $2 million.

Houses in the Houses Against Hunger Program are built largely with donated or discounted materials and labor.—*MCC News Service*

Two groups to receive MBM grants

ELKHART, Ind.—An inner-city youth program in Reading, Pa., and the oldest Mennonite mission on the Navajo reservation in Arizona have been chosen to receive $5,000 grants from Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

For nearly three years, Zion Mennonite Church of Birdsboro, Pa., has been operating Code Blue Ministry in nearby Reading, working with white, African-American and Latino children. Efforts include Bible training, recreational activities and a visitation program.

MBM grant money will help pay for Daniel Smiley's work as pastor at Black Mountain Mennonite Church in Chinle, Ariz., a region where the unemployment rate reaches about 75 percent. Smiley, who grew up in the community, has been Black Mountain's pastor for about a year and a half. Since then, average attendance has risen from 10 to nearly 50. —*MBM News Service*

Canadian relief sales top $1.4 million

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Central Committee relief sales in Canada generated more than $1.4 million (Cdn.) in 1998, about $100,000 more than the previous year. Six of the 14 sales topped $100,000, led by $380,100 from the Central Fraser Valley sale in Abbotsford, B.C.—*MCC Canada News Service*

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Births

Bailey, Ashley Elisabeth, Jan. 1, to Holly (Friesen) and Shawn Bailey, Bradshaw, Neb.

Brueggemann, Anna Justine, Dec. 22, to Jennifer (Penner) and Jon Brueggemann, Hebron, Neb.

Cherveny, Katherine Elizabeth, Dec. 22, to Annette (Bartel) and Kevin Cherveny, Topeka, Kan.

Crowley, David James, Dec. 15, to Brian and Fonda (Kandel) Crowley, Millersburg, Ohio.

Garman, Alexander Riley, Jan. 6, to Douglas and Jill (Martin) Garman, Ephrata, Pa.

Hallman, Ezekiel Jacob, Dec. 28, to Jake Hallman and Tara Haines, Pennsburg, Pa.

Hernley, Katlyn Diane, Dec. 21, to Justin Hernley and Roseann Shannon, Scottdale, Pa.

Isaak, Daniel Lazaro, Dec. 4, to Dan and RoseMarie Isaak, Edmonton.

Kaufman, Lucas Martin, Dec. 18, to Dirk and Mary Kaufman, Scottdale, Pa.

Kulp, Joseph Darren, Oct. 19, to Janelle (Derstine) and Jay Kulp, Ottsville, Pa.

Martin, Melissa Joy, Dec. 31, to Craig and Crystal Martin, Oxford, Pa.

Miller, Garrett Isaac, Dec. 31, to Pamela (Lipely) and Troy Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Perez, Isaac Shalom, Nov. 10, to Samuel and Susanna (Lozano) Perez, Brownsville, Texas.

Peters, Autumn Nicole, Nov. 16, to Ed and Jody (Joyce) Peters, Lancaster, Pa.

Sawatzky, Justin Wayne, Dec. 7, to Amber (Hutchins) and Jeff Sawatzky, Bessie, Okla.

Steck, Konrad James, Jan. 1, to Audrey (Brubaker) and Randy Steck, Williamsburg, Va.

Svoboda, Reilly Kayl, Dec. 23, to Jana (Ratzlaff) and Ryan Svoboda, Lincoln, Neb.

Ward, Jonathan Michael, Nov. 21, to Eric and Jodi (Campbell) Ward, Albuquerque, N.M.

Yothers, Samantha Lynne, Dec. 28, to Jeff and Jenn (Diener) Yothers, Perkasie, Pa.

Marriages

Benett/Salazar: Vannessa Benett, Brownsville, Texas, and Bennito Salazar, Brownsville, Oct. 24 at Iglesia Menonita del Cordero, Brownsville.

Erwin/Herr: Melanie Erwin, Lancaster, Pa., and Thomas Herr, Lancaster, Dec. 19 at New Danville Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Hochstetler/Tulha: Richard Lee Hochstetler, Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Jucara Freitas Tulha, Sao Paulo, Dec. 19 at Jardim das Oliveiras Presbyterian Church, Sao Paulo.

Hosterman/Norton: Jim Hosterman, Mogadore, Ohio, and Debbie Norton, Hartville, Ohio, Jan. 1 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Johnsrud/Shelly: Andrew Johnsrud, Rochester, Minn., and Jessica Shelly, Rochester, Dec. 19 at Bloomington (Minn.) Covenant Church.

Koontz/Kratzer: Nathan Koontz, North Newton, Kan., and Esther Kratzer, Kidron, Ohio, Dec. 28 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Deaths

Albrecht, Evelyn Sharp, 79, Normal, Ill., died Dec. 27 of bone cancer. Spouse: Harold Albrecht (deceased). Parents: Ellis and Clara Sharp (deceased). Survivors: children John, Lita Turner, Helen Hettinger; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30.

Applebaum, Mary Lou, 56, Coopersburg, Pa., died Dec. 9. Spouse: Ross Applebaum. Parents: Floyd (deceased) and Mary Margaret Thayer Todd. Other survivors: children Ryan Myers, Matthew, Lara. Funeral: West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Claassen, Willard, 87, Pratt, Kan., died Dec. 26. Spouse: Edna (Friesen) Claassen. Parents: John and Christine Enns Claassen (deceased). Other survivors: children Stan, Linda Buchmueller; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 30 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Neb.

Dick, Aganetha "Nettie," 99, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Dec. 18 of complications from hip surgery. Spouse: A. B. Dick (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Katharine Falk Sukau (deceased). Survivors: children Irene Tiede, Mildred Brown; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; four great-great grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 21 at Aberdeen.

Ediger, Eldo, 76, Inman, Kan., died Jan. 2. Spouse: Letha Ediger. Parents: Jacob and Marie (Regier) Ediger (deceased). Other survivors: children Wesley, Barbara Jirik, Roxanne Thomas; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Friesen, Ann Doell, 88, Henderson, Neb., died Dec. 30. Survivors: children Charles, Deborah Knickerbocker; two grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 3.

Garber, Joseph Hess, 82, Edmonton, died Dec. 21. Spouse: Thelma Garber. Other survivors: children Larry, Elaine Stauffer, Carl, Evan, Allan, Alvin, Susan, Marilyn Rivers-Bowerman, Janet Paran, David; 20 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 28 at Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

Garber, Snavely, 86, Willow Street, Pa., died Nov. 27. Spouse: Barbara Rohrer Garber. Other survivors: children Kenneth, Dorothy Charles; five grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 2 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Grim, Charles, 88, Poland, Ohio, died Dec. 28 of respiratory failure. Spouse: Mildred Detrow Grim. Parents: Monroe and Luella May Betz Grim (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 30 at Leetonia, Ohio.

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Harms, Ernest, 73, Clinton, Okla., died Dec. 8. Spouse: Ruth Harms. Parents: Julius and Eva Harms (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 10 at Herold Mennonite Church, Cordell, Okla.

Kramer, Ernest, 82, Pennsburg, Pa., died Nov. 22. Spouse: Frances Kramer.

Miller, Esther Mae Eichelberger, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 29. Spouse: Joe Miller (deceased). Parents: Christian and Saloma Eichelberger (deceased). Survivors: children Lois Yoder, Daniel, David, Sam; 12 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 2 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Moyer, Titus, 82, Sellersville, Pa., died Dec. 31 of acute myocardial infarction. Spouse: Esther Yoder Moyer. Parents: William and Esther Clemens Moyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Althea Derstine, Joyce Leasher, Titus; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Neer, Joe, 78, West Liberty, Ohio, died Dec. 29. Spouse: Carolyn Cooper Neer. Parents: Earl and Edna Neer (deceased). Other survivors: children Connie Scheifele, Joan Clayton, Max, Terry, Larry, Roger; 13 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 1 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Ramseyer, Charles Samuel, 74, Pulaski, Iowa, died Dec. 31 of lung fibrosis. Spouse: Lois Kathryn Ramseyer. Parents Sam and Maud Ramseyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Dennis, Paul; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 3.

Roulet, Samuel, 72, Bloomfield, Iowa, died Dec. 14 of heart and kidney failure. Spouse: Mildred Roulet. Parents: Sam and Fannie Roulet (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Keith; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17.

Rush, Wilmer, 89, Quakertown, Pa., died Dec. 17. Spouse: Blanche Rush. Parents: Isaac and Amanda Fretz Rush (deceased). Other survivors: children Lowell, Arthur; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Sell, Stella, 94, Frederick, Pa., died Oct. 13. Parents: Daniel and Mary Huff Hefler (deceased). Survivors: children Daniel, William; 11 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Siemens, Arnold, 82, Albuquerque, N.M., died Nov. 30. Spouse: Elnora Siemens. Parents: Henry and Elsie Froese Siemens (deceased). Other survivors: children Warren, Leslie, Christine Lautt; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 8 in Buhler, Kan.

Yoder, Ralph, 80, Kokomo, Ind., died Dec. 18. Spouse: Clara Hershberger Yoder. Parents: Peter and Mattie Hershberger Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Dennis, Larry, Marty Miller, Betty Kauffman, Irma Stutzman, Joan Gingerich; 14 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 23 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo.

Correction: In the Jan. 5 listing of Gerald Kolb's death, his parents are Merle and Maxine Rodamer.

classifieds

- **Amigo Centre** has an immediate opening for a ***housekeeper***. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Please contact Dana Sommers at 616-651-2811, Dana@amigocentre.org or write to Amigo Centre, 26455 Banker Road, Sturgis, MI 49091.

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., seeks ***summer staff*** June 20-Aug. 13, 1999: counselors, assistant program director, cook, assistant cook, kitchen and maintenance workers, nurse, lifeguard. For more information: 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959.

- **Illinois and Central District conferences** are seeking one full-time ***conference minister*** to serve the Mennonite churches in Illinois, eastern Missouri and Wisconsin, beginning June 1, 1999. For a job description, contact Robert Nolt by Jan. 31 at renolt@juno.com or 309-367-4892.

- **Eastern Mennonite University:** ***director for seminary development***. 12-month, full-time. Bachelor's degree required. Seminary/graduate degree preferred. Skills in fund-raising, marketing and administration helpful. Application deadline Feb. 10, 1999. Richard L. Gunden, 540-432-4499; email gunden@emu.edu.

- **Landis Homes** is seeking a ***director of dining service***. Exciting opportunity for an experienced food service professional to lead our team at Landis Homes, a progressive retirement community in Lititz, Pa. Must have strong team building and communication skills. Health-care experience needed. We offer a great work environment and full benefits.

  For immediate consideration, send resume to Culinary Service Network Inc., 1730 Walton Road Suite 100, Blue Bell, PA 19422; fax 610-828-2328. EOE

- **Menno Haven Inc.** seeks a ***vice president of finance*** for a Mennonite church-related retirement community serving 1,000 residents. Individual will oversee all financial aspects of the organization. Candidate must be able to support our mission, corporate values, vision and Anabaptist principles. Bachelor's degree in business administration or accounting and at least five years of related health-care financial management experience preferred. CPA or MBA a plus.

  Qualified candidates should send resume, references and salary requirements to Chris Bumbaugh, Director of Human Resources, Menno Haven Inc., 1427 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201; 717-262-1000; fax 717-261-0860.

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Extend grace to gays and lesbians who come to Christ

by Paul M. Lederach

Regardless of the side one takes on questions related to homosexuality and the church, people should read *Pastor, I Am Gay* by Howard H. Bess (Palmer Publishing Company, 1995). This book shares stories of people who have come to realize their homosexuality yet have faith in Jesus Christ and long to fellowship in his church. Many of the stories—of rejection and condemnation while searching for fellowship in the Christian community—are heartbreaking.

A similar book is *From Wounded Hearts* (Chi Rho Press, 1998), edited by Roberta Showalter Kreider. She tells stories of Mennonites who discover they are homosexual. These books make the point that not all homosexuals are the same. There are many who do not live the "gay lifestyle" or promote a "gay agenda"—stereotypes held by many in the straight community.

Bess and Kreider ask their readers to look with compassion on that segment of gays and lesbians who long to follow Jesus. Clearly the dreadful behavior of the sexual predators that roamed the dark streets of Sodom looking for newly arrived males does not describe these people (Genesis 18:16–19:29). Nor does the downward spiral of behavior depicted by Paul (Romans 1:18-32) apply. Those of whom Paul wrote knew God; then they became unthankful. They turned to idol worship. As they worshiped the creature rather than the Creator, God gave them over to sexual excesses and all manner of wickedness.

In contrast are the people of whom Bess and Kreider write. Many grew up in Christian homes, participated in the life of their congregations, accepted Jesus Christ as Savior at an early age. They attended church schools. As they matured they realized they were homosexual.

Bess and Kreider help heterosexuals sense the stress of that discovery. To acknowledge it publicly leads to dire consequences in family, church and community. To hide the discovery is to live in fear and to live a lie. The extent to which many of these people have gone to change their orientation, for the most part without success, is painful.

Christians must lay aside the hate, violence and discrimination against homosexuals so common in society. Christians must go further. For a long time I believed and taught that all divorce was wrong. I have come to see that not all divorces are the same. While I do not condone divorce, I realize that there are situations in which it is permissible—in cases of adultery, addiction and abuse.

There is much that is known about homosexuality. There is also much that is still unknown. Fortunately, God knows all, knows the hearts of all. Fortunately, too, God is judge and will judge. As I read and hear the faith stories of gays and lesbians, I am not only less able but also less willing to be judgmental.

While I am well aware of texts in the Scriptures that prohibit homosexual activity, I also know that Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father," and "Anyone who comes to me I will never drive away" (John 6:34, 37). After reading the stories told by Bess and Kreider, I am thankful also for these words of Jesus: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29).

As I read and hear the faith stories of gays and lesbians, I am not only less able but also less willing to be judgmental.

Bess and Kreider are asking Christians to extend grace to gays and lesbians who come to Jesus as Savior and desire to fellowship in the church and to leave judgment to God. God knows all and will deal gently, wisely and justly with us and with them.

Paul M. Lederach is a former overseer and a retired pastor in Franconia Conference.

The 18th-century Mennonite Confession by Ris, Article XVII, "Of the Universal Offer of Grace and the Call of God Unto Faith," includes helpful words. Though directed to the thorny issue of the salvation of those who have not heard the gospel, these words, I believe, are also useful when thinking about the thorny issues related to homosexuality:

"We regard ourselves as both disqualified and unable to define with exactness what the Lord our God through his omnipresent Spirit and his unceasing works of providence does and will do in the consciences of such nations and people who have been deprived of the knowledge of the gospel. For this reason we hold it best to maintain a holy silence on this point, since we know that God's decisions are always in accordance with the most perfect justice and are ordered according to the highest wisdom, and that he does not reap where he has not sown. Or if we should have to choose, we would think that he would for Christ's sake extend his mercy to those who according to the measure of their knowledge of God and his revelation have sought the Lord, feared him and glorified him."—*Paul M. Lederach*

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J. Lorne Peachey

The Mennonite church and homosexuality (2)

Continuing the work to which we have been called

This week *The Mennonite* continues its discussion of homosexuality with the second in John D. Roth's two-part article on why the Mennonite church does not condone same-sex marriages. Last week Roth dealt with two authorities for this decision: Scripture and tradition. This week he looks at two more: personal experience and sexual rights.

Most of the disagreements in the church about homosexuality settles around the authority of the last two. How much credence, for example, do we give to what people say they have experienced, especially when that experience goes counter to what many believe the Scriptures say? While we may not agree on interpretation of Scripture about homosexuality (or even if there are any Scriptures that speak directly to the subject), we surely don't know what to make with evidences of the Holy Spirit in the lives of noncelibate gays and lesbians.

This is the work God would have us do—find a way through this discussion that will demonstrate love and unity.

Many in the church argue that personal experience should be a criterion by which we determine a solution to this issue. But Roth would caution us to go slow about making changes in ethics on this basis. The question of same-sex marriages is relatively new for the church. For its entire history, the church has regarded sexual genital activity outside of heterosexual marriage as against the will of God. To make a change in that position in 10 to 20 years in the aftermath of a sexual revolution in Western culture would be unwise, Roth says.

Going slow may be the toughest part for us all, regardless of our position on this issue. The disagreements about homosexuality and membership will likely not be solved in this generation—perhaps not even in many of our lifetimes. To insist that they be so is to make a mistake, regardless of which way the issue is resolved.

To say that, of course, flies in the face of what we in North American society have come to expect. We want instant answers and immediate solutions. Today's questions have to be answered before tomorrow. We are an impatient people, both as a society and as a church.

The challenge before us as Mennonites today is to find a way to live with uncertainty, ambiguity and disagreement, especially on this issue. We can continue to reaffirm our denominational statements on human sexuality—Saskatoon '86 and Purdue '87—challenging those who are homosexual to a life of purity and chastity, a position that will be difficult for many. At the same time we must continue to call the rest of the church to a life of purity, love and continuing dialogue—something that is also becoming increasingly difficult for others.

This is the work that God would have us do: find a way through this discussion that will demonstrate love and unity. We must also take the time necessary to do so. That is hard when the pressure is on to resolve the question *now*—even if it would derail the integration process.

Four years ago, the Holy Spirit led the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada to explore the possibility of becoming one—deliberately flying in the face of today's increased tribalism and individual rights. Though the road toward integration since has been rocky at times, we cannot abandon it now because of disagreements like this one.

The Spirit continues to call us to unity. Exactly how this call is worked out in relation to membership and homosexuality is still to be determined. Regardless of which way the decision goes, some of us will disagree and be unhappy. We must not, however, allow processing this disagreement and unhappiness to keep us from our primary task.

At Wichita '95, we agreed that this task was to unite. In this way, we said, our witness to the world and our mission to spread the gospel would be enhanced. I continue to believe that, for GCs and MCs at the end of the 20th century, our primary task is to become one, not resolve our disagreements about homosexuality. Unity is the work to which God continues to call us.—*jlp*

Help us with change: Between this issue and the next, the subscription list of *The Mennonite* will be switched from one computer system to another. If your Feb. 2, 1999, issue does not arrive within two or three days of the usual time, please give us a call at 800-790-2498.—*Editor*

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the Mennonite

February 2, 1999

he mission of our church schools

7 None of us will get out of here alive
8 Push for U.S.-Canada partnership
9 Quake levels Colombian church building
16 What they teach at our Mennonite schools

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The membership issue

I am excited that a "Jerusalem Council" has been called to consider the issue of membership in the new denomination. The reason for the excitement is that the outcome of the original Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) may provide a clue for our own future if we follow its learnings.

That original council, persuaded by Peter's dream, accepted the testimony that the Spirit was manifest in the lives of the uncircumcised converts. Sacred writ yielded to experience. The council then asked that the converts only follow the rules of keeping themselves from sexual immorality, from food offered to idols and from blood. Only the first rule has become an article of Christian practice.

If we follow the learnings of Acts 15, we will not exclude gays upon whom the Spirit has lit. We may ask them to live monogamously, but we will not set conditions on what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ other than the manifestation of the Spirit.—*Donald R. Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.*

I believe there is a way to solve the impasse over the issue of membership and homosexuality. It is found in Article 19 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. This calls for celibacy for people not in a heterosexual marriage. This position is fair in that it applies equally to people who are heterosexual or homosexual. We call unmarried heterosexual people to celibacy. We call married heterosexual people to faithfulness to their marriage vows. The issue of moral integrity is much broader than that of homosexuality.

To solve the present impasse at the upcoming consultation on membership and at the St. Louis 99 convention, we would need to recommit ourselves to Article 19 of our confession of faith in support of celibacy. This then would free individuals, congregations and conferences on their own to declare their choice to be members or not of the new denomination based upon their acceptance of celibacy as a way to work redemptively and justly with this issue.—*Eugene K. Souder, Grottoes, Va.*

I have the greatest respect for Robert L. Ramseyer as a missionary, scholar and brother. But the question, "Do each of these area conferences really want the denomination to have authority to tell them who can and cannot be a member?" (Readers Say, Jan. 5) seems to start with a wrong assumption. The wrong assumption seems to be that the denomination is some sort of something out there instead of something of which we are all a part. This is not a matter of some distant body out there imposing standards of membership; it is a matter of whether all of us who claim to be a church are enough of a real, discerning church to agree on some principles of membership. If we cannot have such agreement, how can we go into the world with any coherent witness? Why even claim a common name? Why claim to be a church?—*Theron Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

Ervin Stutzman's proposal that "we consider having different levels of membership" and that "conferences could be free to choose the level at which they would affiliate with and support the new denomination" ("Membership: Looking for Alternatives," Dec. 8) raises a red flag. That sounds too much like the pattern in the current Mennonite Church prior to the 1971 reorganization when several eastern conferences (such as Franconia and Lancaster) never formally joined Mennonite General Conference but participated in varying degrees in denominational work and support. Do we want to return to that kind of pick-and-choose relationship?—*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Might not be one

On the surface of things, knowing Jesus' concern that his followers might be one, effort spent on integration would seem to be well spent. Yet one cannot escape the knowledge of the dissension regarding homosexuals, and that could well raise a larger question: What do we do about the Bible? It is difficult for those who believe in a perfect God in whom there is no darkness to believe that God would leave us with a flawed Scripture. There are also those who believe that the Bible is nothing more than a collection of writings, inspired, but with no more inspiration than any one of us can have. It is very difficult for those who take the Bible to be the indisputable Word of God to feel at one with those who consider the Bible to be merely a collection of writings.
—*James Faul, North Newton, Kan.*

Points about the times

The Dec. 29, 1998, editorial, "Next Year Is the Time to Get Ready for Whatever," was timely and apropos. It also could have been titled, "Good Happens." Additional points worth pondering about the upcoming new millennium are:

1. The vast majority of the world's population

theMennonite

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features

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The Anabaptist difference in Mennonite higher education

7 **None of us will get out of here alive**
Dying is part of life's promise

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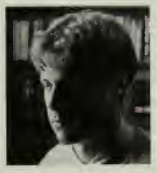

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readers say

could not care less. For 1.25 billion Chinese, it won't even be a millennium; they've seen five others. Most of the world is non-Christian.

2. A lot of people are making a lot of money on the millennium scare. The Latin expression "Caveat emptor" ("Let the buyer beware") comes to mind.

3. When Jesus Christ came the first time, it was not to the most wealthy and powerful people on earth; rather, it was to a tiny and poor country, economically enslaved to the most wealthy and powerful people on earth.

4. The Scriptures teach that no one knows the time of the "Parousia." Mark 13:32-33 says: "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come."—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

Hope for a new millennium

Assume some analyst 50 years from now will do an extensive investigation on this period of our denominational life. Is it not a little scary to think what she might conclude from reading the letters to the editor from the 1990s? I have heard about the Gay Nineties (1890s); I am living these '90s. Is this an every-100-year phenomenon? I hope a new millennium brings a new issue.—*Omer E. King, Coatesville, Pa.*

Spiritual astigmatism

I recently had an eye test and thought of "Perception Is Reality" (Wider World, Jan. 5). The test included the astigmatism exam, in which I was asked to say which of the radiating lines of the target were darker. I suppose that all the lines were equal, but the optician didn't ever say. What mattered is how I perceived those lines. Who is checking our spiritual eyes, and how can we correct the astigmatism that might show up?—*David Hiebert, Scottdale, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

The radical missio

The Anabaptist difference in Mennonite higher education

by Gerald J. Biesecker-Mast

I didn't go to a Mennonite college after I graduated from high school. My parents, like many conservative Mennonites, were convinced that Mennonite higher education posed a greater danger to my Christian commitment than did secular and evangelical institutions. So even though I had considered both Bluffton (Ohio) College and Eastern Mennonite College (now University), Harrisonburg, Va., as possible options, I ended up spending my college years at Malone College, an institution about which I have many good memories.

Fortunately for me, in my adult years I found my way into a Mennonite college as a faculty member. Through teaching at Bluffton and in visiting other Mennonite campuses, I have come to cherish the unique gifts that Mennonite church colleges contribute to the world of higher education. It has become clear to me that Mennonite church colleges are among the best possible contexts for young people of all backgrounds both to find a wider wisdom about the truths of everyday life and to develop a loving loyalty to the church of Jesus Christ.

I am also concerned that churches, parents, and students have not understood what is at stake when faced with the choice between secular or evangelical education on the one hand and learning at a Mennonite church college on the other. The choice is clearer than many people suspect. Mennonite colleges promote a generous and self-sacrificial commitment to the mission of the church as their highest ideal; most other institutions, whether secular or Christian, do not.

Mennonite church colleges are among the best possible contexts for young people of all backgrounds both to find a wider wisdom about the truths of everyday life and to develop a loving loyalty to the church of Jesus Christ.

Separation from the world: As a student at an evangelical college I was encouraged to think about the world from a Reformed perspective on the creation. God created the world as good, I was taught, but after the fall, human sin distorted the institutions and cultures that ordered the created world. In that Reformed perspective on the creation, God's plan of redemption made it possible for Christians to see within the corrupted creation the original intention of the Creator. Thus, according to this view, we Christians must now work at restoring all of life to God's good intention. As this "all of life redeemed" perspective was interpreted to me, the church is just one of many human institutions that God seeks to redeem, rather than the primary agent of God's reign in the world.

On a number of occasions as a student at Malone I was told explicitly that the Anabaptist view was heretical because it contradicted the premise of this Reformed theology of creation. It is wrong, I was told, to say that certain institutions—the military, for example—should be rejected in principle as legitimate vocations for Christians. More fundamentally, I learned at Malone, Anabaptist theology did not properly acknowledge the goodness of all God's creation and focused too narrowly on the church as God's primary agent of mission and transformation.

For many years I enthusiastically accepted this perspective until I read John Howard Yoder's writings and realized that the Anabaptist understanding of church and world as articulated, for example, in the Schleitheim Articles, is more complicated than the straw man set up by the Reformed critique of Anabaptism. Anabaptist theology acknowledges the goodness of creation but aspires, nevertheless, to the perfection of Christ. The sword, for example, is said in article seven of the Schleitheim Articles to be ordained by God and can be used for the good; however, the Christian disciple rejects the sword as outside Christ's higher law of love.

I believe the Mennonite colleges have absorbed the worldview of the Schleitheim Articles. At Mennonite colleges, students come to understand the good creation of God in all its glory and fallenness; at the same time they are urged to consider the higher way of Christ as embodied by the church. More than

f teaching & thinking

seeking in the creation a dim reflection of God's original intention, students at Mennonite colleges are urged to identify with the new creation that is to come and that is already recognizable in the work of the church.

At Bluffton College, for example, undergraduates can obtain a criminal justice major in which they study the realities, both good and evil, of the American criminal justice system. Along the way they are also introduced to alternative models of justice, models that grow out of the higher way of Christian forgiveness and restitution found in the life of the church and given expression by such church outreaches as the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program. This approach mirrors the kind of learning I find in academic departments of all the Mennonite colleges. Whether students are studying human communication, physics, history, music or educational theory, they are provided with resources for understanding and cultivating the material and social landscape of God's good-but-fallen creation at the same time that they are urged toward a life of faith that strives for Christ's perfection.

In that sense, students at Mennonite colleges are called to separation: separation of church from world, separation of mission from vocation, and separation of Christ's perfection from God's creation. Such separation is the first step in offering young people a clear choice between a pilgrimage of faith and a lifetime of security. Rather than integrate faith and learning so as to feel comfortable in the world, our students are encouraged to find faith beyond learning so as to resist conformity to the world. Thus, students at Mennonite colleges are urged to inhabit the creative tension between being in the world and not of it.

Humility in scholarship: In reaching with students toward Christ's perfection, Mennonite church colleges by necessity are modest about their calling and purpose. In a church whose theology demands suspicion of the arrogance of higher learning, Mennonite colleges have learned to ask of themselves the very questions that the colleges' critics have been asking. At a recent consultation on Mennonite education at Goshen (Ind.) College, I heard faculty members and administrators from Bethel College (North Newton, Kan.), Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University, Hesston (Kan.) College, Goshen College, Bluffton College and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) discuss with passion and concern how to teach the liberal arts without destroying the tender faith of students. At Bluffton, faculty and staff regularly discuss the spiritual and intellectual development of specific students, always seeking the best strategies for strengthening that student's character or encouraging this student's faith.

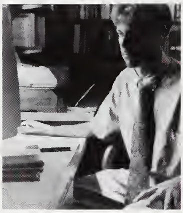
Such a context demands that we faculty members view the rich resources of our academic disciplines from within the larger perspective of the church's mission to students. While the primary work of the college is academic training and research, the primary mission of the church is discipleship building and maintenance. And while the church ought to view the college as indispensable to its mission, the college should not be fused with the church. If a Mennonite college in all of its programs acknowledges the priority of the church's mission, the church in turn should acknowledge that the college's function is not exactly the same as that of the church. The college stresses academics. The church emphasizes discipleship. A church college in the Anabaptist tradition stresses academics in the context of discipleship.

Because of the priority of the church's mission, academic disciplines in Mennonite colleges are never viewed as ultimate arbiters of God's truth. Such ultimate discernment is the responsibility of the church. Academic disciplines from biology to theology can tell us much about how the world of God is ordered and transformed. But academic disciplines cannot explain the blessed miracle of regeneration or the radical commitment of discipleship. The world of God is not the body of Christ. For this reason, Mennonite colleges are never satisfied with a mere analysis of the way things are or simple preparation for vocation. Instead our institutions call students and faculty to the perfection of Christ, before whom scholars and researchers must bow.

Such humility in scholarship explains why Mennonite educators find disciplinary imperialism distasteful. During my years in graduate

Whether students are studying human communication, physics, history, music or educational theory, they are provided with resources for understanding and cultivating the material and social landscape of God's good-but-fallen creation at the same time that they are urged toward a life of faith that strives for Christ's perfection.

school, I became weary of the turf battles and interdisciplinary wars in the institutional marketplace, where acquisition of resources was dependent on arguments for the ultimate value and status of one's own discipline. It was a great relief recently to hear Bluffton faculty members explain to a consultant on our campus that the college's pay equity policy prevents any faculty member from getting paid more simply because of the prestige of his or her discipline. Our faculty members also had to explain why they were uninterested in using an accreditation process to leverage more attention and resources from the administration. What an exercise in counter-cultural reasoning!



Students on all our campuses are gaining practical and theoretical skills for the vocations of the 21st century in communities of learning infused by the call to Christian discipleship.

Mission as priority: I think one of my parents' greatest concerns was that a college education would turn me away from the church. That concern has been incorporated into the heart of Mennonite educational institutions and it is a concern that drives every interaction I have with students. Unfortunately, because parents and churches are often misinformed about Mennonite college campuses, our young people often end up at evangelical or secular institutions that undermine commitment to the church. Such institutions weaken support for the church either by urging students to view the work of Christ as dispersed throughout the larger culture or by replacing the church with an academic discipline as the ultimate arbiter of truth.

At Mennonite colleges, universities and seminaries, from Fresno to Harrisonburg, I have seen faculty and administrators stressing the commitment of their institutions to the mission of the church. At Bluffton we say, for example, that we are preparing students not only "for life as well as vocation" but also for "the purposes of God's universal kingdom." At Goshen the motto is "Culture for Service." At Fresno Pacific, this commitment to the church has been framed eloquently in a text called the "Fresno Pacific Idea," which stresses the prophetic role of the university in standing with the church in a critique of the surrounding culture.

All these mission statements and mottoes carry with them the original perception of the Schleitheim Articles—indeed, of the Sermon on the Mount—that following Christ goes against the grain of conventional wisdom and popular assumption. By making this nonconformist commitment the centerpiece of educational philosophy, our colleges are preparing students for lives of service to a life-giving and hope-sustaining church, whatever their specific vocation or calling.

I am pleased to report that the vision and mission statements of our colleges are being incarnated in the vibrant and energizing crosscurrents of campus and classroom life. At Goshen, faculty are meeting to plan a conference on Mennonites and the family that they hope will provide guidance to churches and students. Last spring at EMU, pastors and professors met to discuss the relevance of the gospel in an era of pluralism. Here at Bluffton last summer nearly 200 faculty members, pastors, church workers and students gathered to probe the relationship between Anabaptist commitments and postmodern culture. (See *The Mennonite*, Oct. 20, 1998.)

My Bluffton colleague across the hall, Lisa Robeson, is researching how such popular medieval literature as stories about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table carry within them the critiques of a war-obsessed feudal culture. Biology professor Todd Rainey is studying the implications of research into social biology for explaining constraints on human ethics. Poet and English professor Jeff Gundy is thinking through the relationship between the production of literature and the character of the church. Religion professor Denny Weaver is working at Anabaptist alternatives to mainstream orthodox theology. And students on all our campuses are gaining practical and theoretical skills for the vocations of the 21st century in communities of learning infused by the call to Christian discipleship.

I find myself engaged in frequent discussions with colleagues at Bluffton and at other Mennonite colleges about how we bring the way of Christ into our classrooms to challenge our understanding and knowledge. Often during those discussions we rejoice at those students and graduates from many different backgrounds who mature into Christian disciples, finding their way into the service of the church by taking up voluntary service and missionary assignments or by joining the work of a local congregation through confession or baptism. In the witness of such students who love and serve the church our Mennonite colleges find their reason for existence.

Gerald Biesecker-Mast is assistant professor of communication at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

U.S. Mennonite colleges:

Bethel College,
North Newton, Kan.

Bluffton College,
Bluffton, Ohio

Eastern Mennonite
University,
Harrisonburg, Va.

Fresno Pacific
University,
Fresno, Calif.

Goshen College,
Goshen, Ind.

Hesston College,
Hesston, Kan.

Tabor College,
Hillsboro, Kan.

None of us will get out of here alive

by Sandra Drescher-Lehman

"Can you keep a secret, Mom?" my 5-year-old Jonathan said. "Yes." (Well, I can, although he will one day learn that secrecy is not one of my strengths, as I am now telling many people what he said next.)

"Sometimes I pray that we'll all die together in seven years. Because if I die first, you'll be too sad, and if you die first, I'll be too sad. But we'll all be happy together in heaven if we die together." I assumed the "all" meant his dad, his older sister, Maria, and myself. I was right.

I understood the sad part. I felt the same way, although I would never admit to praying that strongly for someone else's death. I was curious, though, about the seven years. He said seven was just a good, long time.

Time is such a relative concept. How long I can or should expect to live is also relative.

When my cancer was discovered, I was just beginning to read through the Bible with the fifth-grade Sunday school class I was teaching. I was struck again by how long the earliest people lived. Methuselah (Genesis 5:27) lived the longest—a little under 10 centuries—but others lived a long time, too. To live one century today is amazing. Most of us expect and want to live to be more than 80. If our bodies fall apart before that, we pray for a miracle.

Faced with my own cancer, I've been pondering the massacres in Joshua and Judges. Ten thousand died here. One hundred twenty thousand were killed there. Sometimes every living thing was taken by the sword. Other times the animals or the women and children were taken as booty.

I've thought a lot about those women who lost their husbands and brothers and children, and the children who lost their fathers. That was sadder to me than when an entire city was taken. I understood why Jonathan was praying that we all die together.

I feel small in the face of those passages. I am one tiny life in a long history of people created and loved by God. Beside Methuselah, I'm just getting started. Beside many others, 40 years is already a long life. God doesn't seem to honor a certain age as the right length of time for us to be on earth. In different eras, different ages have been the norm.

By the time I got to the New Testament in the Bible-read-through, a verse in James summed up where I was heading: "What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14b).

To view my life in the procession of those who have lived and died before me and who will live and die after me has changed my thinking. I know I'm an important part of the procession—as important as the Old Testament victors—but also not any more important than any of those nameless women who died in Joshua's many slaughters. I know I'm special to my family and friends, but in the larger scheme of history, not any more important than all the other mothers who have died of cancer and left small children.

None of us will get out of here alive. Our departure times will only differ by a matter of years in light of eternity. I think about the fact that this could be the last fall I jump in the leaves with my children. I'm not planning to die this year, but I now know it's a possibility and it doesn't feel morbid. It's part of life's promise.

I'm not planning to die this year, but I now know it's a possibility and it doesn't feel morbid. It's part of life's promise.

This has been the change in my thinking. On the feeling level, where I most often exist, I still want to live long enough to watch my children grow up. If I get that, I'll probably want to watch my grandchildren grow up, too.

Living, however, after contemplating my place in the procession of life and death, has a different glow to it. It's been a reminder to celebrate the energy I do have. It's time, right now, to tell my family how much I love them and to write in my children's journals. It's time to share my resources more liberally with those who have a need. It's time to spend more on my own stingy self. It's time to pay less attention to conflict in my relationships and work more on planting joy. It's time to refill all those containers that came to our house, piled high with food when I couldn't cook, and deliver them to the next family in need. It's time to have as much fun as possible. It's time to think about how lucky I'll be when it's my turn to meet the father-in-law I never knew here, and share his new home.

Sandra Drescher-Lehman is an elder at First Mennonite Church, Richmond, Va.

We've asked various people throughout the Mennonite world, What changes have you made in your life in the last two years because of your involvement with God's Word? Their replies appear approximately every other week in *The Mennonite* in this series called Transformations. —*Editors*

Group pushes U.S.-Canada partnership

Merger plan causes concern for Integration Committee

CHICAGO—As the Integration Committee prepares to pass the integration baton, it is calling for the new Mennonite Church in the United States and Canada to make sure they run the race together.

Last March's decision to realign the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) into two integrated country denominations—each one separate but having joint ministries with the other—has generated concerns that the partnership will eventually dissolve. So the Integration Committee, meeting Jan. 22-23 in Chicago, passed a recommendation that the U.S. and Canadian executive committees meet together at least once a year to "make decisions and expedite partnership agenda."

The recommendation will go to the GC, MC and CMC general boards in April with hopes of eventually finding its way to the delegates at this summer's joint convention in St. Louis. "That would be a nice way to start the new denomination," said Integration Committee member Ruth Suter.

The committee, in probably its last meeting before St. Louis 99, noted four partnership areas:

- worship and fellowship, such as joint assemblies and youth conventions;
- creation and publishing, such as curriculum, church statements and visual identity;
- joint programs, such as Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Mennonite Women and Mennonite Men;
- discernment, such as meetings, assemblies and consultations.

In a related measure, the Integration Committee's executive committee will articulate the rationale for the two-country structure.

The impetus for the Integration Committee's action on partnership grew out of a last-ditch measure brought to the meeting by committee member Don Steelberg, who has championed strong links between the United States and Canada. His plan, which was never voted on, called for creating a binational level including theological and doctrinal leadership, clergy credentialing, AMBS oversight and joint conventions. Without such connections across the border, Steelberg said, "The binational church is dead; it's a joint fellowship."

But committee member Mary Burkholder noted that efforts to create a binational church, such as the regional model, have failed. "We're committed to [the two-country structure] now," she said. "We've reached the point of no turning back. And that's why we're using the partnership language."

Said Steelberg, "We have talked about partnership, but we haven't talked about structure which carries that forward."

"I think we need to put some teeth into it," said committee co-chair Dorothy Nickel Friesen, "and Don has put our toes to the fire."

Also sparking discussion were anti-racism efforts in the new church. The current proposal calls for five of the 20 or 21 spots on the new U.S. church's Executive Board—the church's top board—to be filled by people of color, chosen by the nominating committee. But current MC racial/ethnic groups say they want direct representation. The African-American Mennonite Association, Hispanic Mennonite Convention and United Native Ministries now have representatives on the MC General Board.

Furthermore, unlike the current MC delegate assembly, proposals for the new church do not provide seats for the racial/ethnic groups.

"We had more structures compatible with anti-racism than we do now [under plans for the new church]," said committee member Lindsey Robinson, an African-American.

The committee charged with drawing up U.S. church structures has suggested that three of the five Executive Board spots for people of color be appointed by the current GC and MC racial/ethnic groups—African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans—plus Asians, who do not have a similar organization. A Jan. 26 conference call was scheduled to discuss the idea with leaders of these groups.

In other meeting activity, the Integration Commmittee:

- commended Vision: Healing and Hope as the vision statement for the emerging new church structures;
- heard plans to conduct a congregational study this fall to help shape the new church;
- heard a report from and held discussion with members from the Integration Education Committee about the colleges and seminaries in the new church.—*Rich Preheim*

Committee eyes end of the road

More than three years after its inception, the Integration Committee has probably stopped meeting sooner than planned.

Although the committee will not disband until the joint convention in St. Louis in July, members decided its Jan. 22-23 gathering in Chicago was its last, barring something unforeseen.

The committee originally planned to meet again in April to respond to General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada board meetings, which are normally held in March. But the general boards will meet this year in April, allowing little time for the committee to address their concerns before materials have to be printed for St. Louis 99.

Committee members also noted that much integration work has been turned over to other bodies, including committees on membership and country structures.

Should any further business need to be conducted, it can be done via telephone conference call or email.
—*Rich Preheim*

Earthquake demolishes Colombian church

ARMENIA, Colombia—The Mennonite congregation in the city of Armenia was destroyed and a person from a church member's family was buried in rubble following the Jan. 25 earthquake which rocked western Colombia.

Gamaliel Falla, a Commission on Overseas Mission worker from Cali, 100 miles southwest of Armenia, arrived in the city on Jan. 26. He is accompanying Antonio Herrera, the Mennonite pastor, to visit church members. Mencoldes, the Colombian Mennonite development agency, is distributing food, water, medicine and generators to victims. Mennonite Central Committee has committed $50,000 for an immediate response in the region.

The quake, which registered 6 on the Richter scale, destroyed 70 percent of the city, including the meeting place of the Mennonite Church of Armenia. Herrera's home was one of the few buildings left standing.

The quake killed an estimated 2,000 people and injured 15,000. About 180,000 of Armenia's 300,000 people have been left homeless.—*Rich Preheim*

MCC photo by Frank Albrecht

Three displaced children participate in a drama presentation at a Bogotá shelter run by Mencoldes, a Colombian Mennonite development agency. Nearly 1 million Colombians have been displaced from their rural homes due to violence in the countryside.

Finding shelter from storms of violence

Displaced Colombians get help from Mennonite agency

BOGOTÁ, Colombia—Antonio was a coca farmer—and has the darkened hands to show for it. "This is all farmers get from planting coca plants," he says. "These stains on my hands will never come out."

But Antonio believes someone wanted his land and was willing to resort to violence to get it. "Our land is valuable, and there are both national and international companies that want it," he says. "They use paramilitary groups to threaten us and kill our family members so that we will flee and leave everything behind."

Today, Antonio and his family live in Bogotá, like so many other people uprooted by the violence in the countryside. They are among the nearly 1 million displaced people in Colombia, living in shelters throughout the country. Antonio's home is a shelter run by Mencoldes, a development agency of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Brethren in Colombia.

Mencoldes also provides advocacy for displaced families claiming new lands and training for people learning new skills.

While life in a shelter can be hard for adults, it can be even more so for children such as 5-year-old Paola, who lives in the Mencoldes shelter with her parents and five siblings.

One day shelter director Eunice Garcia hugged Paola and asked if she felt ill. "It hurts here," the little girl responded, pointing to her heart. From then on, Garcia and the other workers gave Paola a little extra attention. She began to cry less and became a happier child.

"Many of these children have already seen the ugly face of massacres or heard machine guns," says Martha Santanilla, who helps take care of the 26 children at the Mencoldes shelter.

When the children first arrive, she says, they are afraid, crying, acting aggressive or often barely speaking. "In their innocent minds, they still do not understand why these things happen and why they left home," Santanilla says.

Because many parents remain emotionally scarred by their displacement, they often pay little attention to their children. Santanilla helps the children to express their feelings through dialogue, drawing, dance, games and songs. Mencoldes also conducts weekly recreation activities out of the shelter, such as craft classes and folk dances. Santanilla says the dance presentations to local church groups have helped the children feel more secure and outgoing.—*Elizabeth Soto for MCC News Service*

> Many of these children have already seen the ugly face of massacres or heard machine guns.
>
> — *Martha Santanilla*

New congregational peace initiative calls for churches to go second mile

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, Mo.—As armies train soldiers to make war, churches that embrace Jesus' nonviolent ethic should train people to make peace.

That's the push behind a new North American Mennonite initiative that was officially launched Jan. 8-10 at Lake Doniphan Retreat Center in Excelsior Springs. "Being a peace church is not just a matter of saying we are," says Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM), one of the sponsors for the congregation-based peace training process, called Second Mile.

Over the next two to three years, a five-member working group will direct the project, including contracting with an editor, gathering writers and holding writers' workshops. Second Mile material will not be available before 2001, following testing with pilot congregations.

The program first started to take shape in the early 1990s, when Barrett and Linda Gehman Peachey, then co-director for peace and justice ministries for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S., began talking about the need for a process similar to Living in Faithful Evangelism that would involve entire congregations in learning what it means to be peacemakers.

Since an organizational meeting in May 1997, an inter-Mennonite group has hammered out a structure, vision statement and logo as well as the name Second Mile, which comes from Jesus' command to love the enemy by "going the second mile."

"This is a process that congregations will follow to determine where they are as far as their calling to be peacemakers, where they need to grow, what action this is leading to, with opportunities for worship built into all parts of the process," says Doug Krehbiel, director of peace and justice for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Organizations participating in Second Mile are CHM, Mennonite Church General Board's office for peace and justice, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, African-American Mennonite Association, MCC U.S. and MCC Canada. The Church of the Brethren has also been invited to join.

"This isn't just a curriculum; it's a church-wide change process," says Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

Susan Mark Landis, MC minister for peace and justice, says, "Diversity and flexibility are key." She notes that flexibility means that congregations will be able to develop a process that suits their individual needs; diversity means having as wide a spectrum of people involved as possible, including Hispanic, Native and African-American.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC, MC General Board, MCC and CMC news services*

Meeting adds up for mathematicians

As they have been doing for nearly 30 years, a group of Mennonite mathematicians gathered Jan. 14 while attending the American Mathematical Society's national meetings.

The common threads of teaching, historical background and faith draw the participants together for a meal, says organizer Jim Hartman, chair of the mathematical sciences department at the College of Wooster (Ohio).

"We get together because we enjoy fellowship," he says.

Those at this year's gathering, held in San Antonio, Texas, came from Mennonite schools such as Bluffton (Ohio) College and Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan., but also from non-Mennonite institutions, such as Seattle Pacific University and the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Canadian war crimes case dismissed

WATERLOO, Ont.—A judge has thrown out the Canadian government's attempt to deport a former Mennonite accused of collaborating with the Nazis in the Ukraine during World War II.

In a Dec. 21, 1998, decision, the judge said the government couldn't prove that Johann Dueck was a member of a collaborating police force in the Ukraine. Even if he had been a collaborator, according to the decision, immigration officials at the time would have had no legal authority to screen and exclude him.

Dueck, born in a Mennonite community in Ukraine in 1919 and now living in St. Catharines, Ont., immigrated to Canada in 1948. He maintains that he was forced to be a translator for the occupying German army during World War II but was not involved in other activities.

Dueck arrived in Canada with the help of the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization. The Dueck family last year appealed to Canadian Mennonites for financial assistance to help cover his legal fees. The government began its case against Dueck in 1995.

Canadian attempts to prosecute war criminals has already resulted in the deportation of two people, including Mennonite Jacob Luitjens of Vancouver. In 1992, he was ordered deported to the Netherlands where he subsequently served 28 months in prison.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Beliefs bolster St. Paul official's assignment to ensure the safety of city employees

ST. PAUL, Minn.—As a Mennonite, Alberto Quintela espouses nonviolence. As an assistant to the mayor of St. Paul, he is being called to apply that belief to the civic arena for the safety of city employees.

Quintela, one of two North Americans on the Mennonite World Conference executive committee, is chairing a task force on preventing violence in the workplace. Several St. Paul city employees have fallen victim recently to gunfire, including a city building inspector who was killed when he entered a home in response to a complaint, and paramedics who have been shot while responding to calls.

"Our front-line employees are often harassed and abused," Quintela says. "Verbal harassment happens among colleagues, also."

So he and his task force are working on solutions. "We can't have everybody read the Martyrs Mirror or even participate in Bible studies," Quintela says. Instead, workers will go through "de-escalating violence" training over the next year. The course will mix practical tips and philosophical discussions about when it is justifiable to retreat from a violent situation and when it is appropriate to confront violence.

"I bring the concept that there can be a nonviolent response to violence," Quintela says. "Our human impulse—and, frequently, an institution's impulse—is to meet force with greater force. But we have other options. We can de-escalate, withdraw and recognize our cultural differences in the meanings of touch, body language and tone of voice."

For example, city staff are considering ways to present themselves less confrontationally. "Weapons create tension," Quintela says. "But so do other signals. Do our inspectors need to wear uniforms? Must our trucks carry the official logo? Do park rangers have to wear badges?"

One area of training will highlight the many cultural communities within the city and the different values each places on tone and touch.

In addition, employees who have been victims of violence will receive assistance. "We want to help them acknowledge the stages of emotion they are likely to experience," he says.

"We're going to try something here," Quintela says. "If we save one life, it's worth it. If we drop the level of confrontation and the negative language, we'll have less violence, safer employees, a safer city. How do you develop peaceful communities?"—*Phyllis Pellman Good of MWC News Service*

I bring the concept that there can be a nonviolent response to violence.

—*Alberto Quintela*

SOOP posts record numbers in 1998

ELKHART, Ind. —When Harry and Margaret Prough of Middlebury, Ind., retired three years ago, they wanted to do more than while away their time on rocking chairs.

"We made up our minds years ago that when the time comes to retire, we wanted to do some volunteer work somewhere," Harry says. "And we wanted to go somewhere with a warmer climate in the winter."

The Proughs found the perfect opportunity with Service Opportunities for Older People (SOOP), run jointly by Mennonite Association of Retired Persons (MARP), Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

This year the Proughs made their third SOOP trip to Carlsbad, N.M., where Harry did maintenance work at a Boys and Girls Club, and Margaret was a secretary at a clinic. They were also active in the local Mennonite congregation. But the Proughs are hardly alone in their desire to serve. In 1998, SOOP had a record 132 volunteers—a hefty increase over the four volunteers SOOP started with in 1991.

"We've got a success, if success is numbers, enjoyment and satisfaction," says MARP executive director Barbara Reber.

SOOP began after research showed that adults over age 50 want to do two things: give time to the church and travel.

"There are a lot of retired or semi-retired people in the churches who are financially OK, who are still healthy and energetic and who want to be put to good use," says Jorge Valleus, MBM's Short-Term Missions director. "They have not just a life experience but professional experience as well. They don't need supervision, and they're self-motivated."

While the supporting agencies do a lot of legwork in setting up project sites and doing paperwork, SOOP volunteers choose where they want to go, how long they want to stay and how much they want to work, find their own place to stay and pay their own way.

Most volunteers fall in the 60 to 70 age range (although one 85-year-old man still volunteers) and usually serve for two to three months. SOOP operates year-round, with 51 locations in the United States and 11 in Canada. But most projects take place in warm climates during the winter. Some volunteers return to the same location for several years, while others go to new places each year.
—*Gary Kauffman for MBM News Service*

Correction: A list of Mennonite schools and their athletic team nicknames omitted two Mennonite Secondary Education Council members: the Menonita Academia Dolphins, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and the New Covenant Christian School Flames, Lebanon, Pa. Another MSEC member, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, does not play interscholastic sports.

by the way ...

Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore., has raised an average of $12,500 per year since 1984 through the sale of Christmas trees.
—In Touch

EMM contributions set record high in 1998

SALUNGA, Pa.—Contributions to Eastern Mennonite Missions were up nearly 3 percent in 1998, setting a record of $6.6 million in receipts for the year. It was the first time in the 1990s that EMM income increased for two consecutive years.

Of the $184,000 gain over 1997, $161,000 came from a special fund appeal to Lancaster Conference congregations for relief efforts after Hurricane Mitch ravaged Central America last fall.

"It is so good to experience the faithfulness of the people of God," says EMM president Richard Showalter. "We know in the end that missions is not dollar driven, but it is right to give thanks to the Lord for this."*—EMM News Service*

CPT joins protest at military communications site

CLAM LAKE, Wis.—Eighty people, including 17 Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members, gathered Jan. 17 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday to protest a nuclear submarine communications facility in northern Wisconsin.

The facility, the Extremely Low Frequency Project, sends low-frequency signals to nuclear submarines stationed deep in oceans around the world. After receiving the signals, the submarines rise to a shallower depth to receive firing orders. Evidence indicates the system was used in the December 1998 attacks on Iraq.

Nine CPT members were among 16 demonstrators arrested for trespassing on the site. They are each subject to fines of $181.

"It's a sinful thing that we can even think of nuclear warfare—and we are so blasé about it," says CPT member Claire Evans, who was one of the protesters arrested. "I resisted arrest here to convey a sense of urgency about this situation."*—CPT News Service*

Nicaraguans want connections

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—Hurricane Mitch has made support more important than ever, say Nicaraguan Anabaptists. So they have made a priority of linking Nicaraguan congregations with brothers and sisters in North America.

Enlace is a program of the Peace and Justice Commission, a joint effort of the three Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences in the country. Enlace wants to promote sharing of resources and also of people between Nicaragua and North America.

"Nicaraguans need words of encouragement," says German Garcia. "We need to be in solidarity with those who are suffering. And we need to know that others are present with us, even if it's only through words, prayers and letters."*—MCC News Service*

Goshen president receives second term

GOSHEN, Ind.—Shirley H. Showalter, Goshen College president since 1996, has been appointed to a second term by Mennonite Board of Education (MBE).

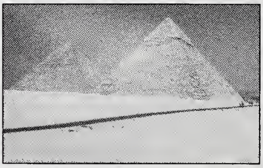
The reappointment, which begins in July and ends in 2003, came following a recommendation by the Goshen board of overseers. A three-person review committee, appointed by the board and MBE, noted that Showalter is "the right person at the right time for the right institution."

Mennonite Press garners awards

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite Press of Newton recently won the best of show awards in all classes in a competition sponsored by the Wichita and Mid-Kansas Clubs of Printing House Craftsmen. Mennonite Press received best of class in the large press division for a travel book and in the small press division for presentation envelopes for a design agency.

Mennonite Press took home 16 other printing awards, including for *With* magazine, *Mennonite Life* magazine and a poster and brochure for a Robert Shaw program at Bethel College.

The Commission on Education is majority owner of Mennonite Press.



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Events

Pacific Southwest Conference midyear assembly, Feb. 5-6, Fresno, Calif.
Congregational Hospitality workshop, Feb. 6, Lancaster, Pa. Sponsored by New Life Ministries.
Puerto Rico Conference annual meeting, March 11-14, Aibonito, P.R.
Mennonite Health Assembly, March 25-28, Colorado Springs, Colo.
Giving Project Gathering, March 26-27, Iowa City, Iowa.

Births

Bass, Annette Jean, Jan. 9, to Bob and Deana (Muller) Bass, Nampa, Idaho.
Frustino, Susanna Beth, Dec. 30, to Daniel and Sally (Shore) Frustino, Harleysville, Pa.
Goossen, Renata Caroline, Jan. 7, to Carl and Kristine (Claassen) Goossen, Potwin, Kan.
King, Cassidy Mara, Jan. 11, to Nolan and Nori (Bontrager) King, Cochranville, Pa.
Kuper, Curtis John, Jan. 1, to Jerred and Tammy (Vangroningen) Kuper, Palmerston, Ont.
Michaels, Noah Alexander, Jan. 3, to Loren and Tara (Gingerich) Michaels, Ligonier, Ind.
Miller, Micah Angel, Dec. 18, to Mark and Wendy (Wyse) Miller, Archbold, Ohio.
Naylor, Sarah Kelsea, Dec. 23, to Michelle (Somers) and Steve Naylor, Burlington, Ont.
Roth, Camryn Troy, Jan. 10, to Jerry and Wendy (Troyer) Roth, Canby, Ore.
Showalter, Blake Ross, Dec. 16, to Angela (McFarland) and Matthew Showalter, McPherson, Kan.
Smith, Therin Apollos, Nov. 22, to Jeff and Kathy Smith, Archbold, Ohio.
Snip, Sadie Elizabeth, Dec. 17, to Kerri (McKenzie) and Mitch Snip, Kitchener, Ont.
Steffy, Daniel Allan, Jan. 6, to Eric and Rebecca (Miller) Steffy, Lansdale, Pa.

Marriages

Bontrager/Vice: Joan Bontrager, Hutchinson, Kan., and Leroy Vice, Bucklin, Kans. Nov. 28 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.
Conrad/Rupp: Beth Conrad, Indianapolis, and David Rupp, Indianapolis, Jan. 2 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Eaton/Pankratz: Ruth Eaton, Fort Collins, Colo., and Josh Pankratz, Fort Collins, Dec. 30 at Estes Park, Colo.

Deaths

Aeschliman, Viola Francis Rupp, 86, Phoenix, died Jan. 5. Spouse: John Aeschliman (deceased). Parents: Frank and Lydia Lugbill Rupp (deceased). Survivors: children Mona Mann, Merlin; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 9 at Sunnyslope Mennonite Church, Phoenix.
Bontrager, Edna Bontrager, 94, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Jerry Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Edward and Fannie Yoder Bontrager (deceased). Survivors: children Ray, Grace Hershberger, Lola Faye Erb, Donna Mae Martin; 15 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 15 at Yoder Mennonite Church, Haven, Kan.
Brunk, Margaret Suter, 87, Harrisonburg, Va., died Jan. 5. Spouse: George Brunk II. Parents: Early and Nettie Pearl Blosser Suter (deceased). Other survivors: children Gerald, George III, Paul, Conrad, Barbara Gascho; 11 grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; two great-grandchildren; four step great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 8 at Harrisonburg.
Ediger, Ben, 87, Inman, Kan., died Jan. 6. Spouse: Eleanor Ediger. Parents: Peter and Katie Martens Ediger (deceased). Other survivors: children Warren, Donovan, Donna Smith; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.
Emswiler, Emma Garber, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 26 of heart failure. Spouse: Ray Emswiler (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Ella Snavely Garber (deceased). Survivors: children David, Frank, Esther Kraybill, Irene Good; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Trissels Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.
Epp, Lizzie Mierau, 85, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 7. Survivors: children Wilbur, Ralph; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 7.
Greaser, Stanley "Quay," 80, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Martha Allebach Greaser. Parents: Matthew Quay and Sarah Grater Greaser (deceased). Other survivors: children Thaley, Newton; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Souderton.
Headings, Samuel Glen, 75, Albany, Ore., died Dec. 29 of a stroke and congestive heart failure. Spouse: Barbara Headings. Parents: Elmer and Ada Hooley Headings (deceased). Other survivors: children Milton, Starla Beck, Mary Anne Zoss, Glen; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 2 at Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church.
Hershey, Curtis, 27, Harrisonburg, Va., died Jan. 4 of injuries received in an automobile accident. Spouse: Stephanie Moyer Hershey. Parents: Cleo and Mary Ann Hershey. Memorial service: Jan. 8 at Harrisonburg, Va., and Jan. 10 at Old Road Mennonite Church, Gap, Pa.
King, Edward, 56, Peoria, Ill., died Jan. 8. Spouse: Gloria Horst King. Parents: Floyd (deceased) and Naomi Hartzler King. Other survivors: children Eric, Bradley, Dan, Monica Ruthenberg, Maria Hatfield; four grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Trinity Temple, Peoria.
Miller, Ada Fern Yoder, 93, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 8. Spouse: Billie Miller (deceased). Parents: Charles and Susanna Heatwole Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Alma Kuhns, LaVera Ressler, Chester, B.J., Galen; 22 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 11 at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.
Miller, Lena Fisher, 42, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 8 of cancer. Spouse: Leon Miller. Parents: Elmer and Mary King Fisher. Other survivors: children Analies Noel, Joel. Funeral: Jan. 13 at Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster.
Peters, Aldus, 85, Lancaster, Pa., died Dec. 25. Spouse: Nora Metzler Peters. Parents: Aldus and Emma Chambers Peters (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Elsie Minnich, Martin, Walter, Ray, Roy; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at New Providence (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Shantz, Rosetta, 96, Cambridge, Ont., died Dec. 23. Survivors: son Paul; two grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 26.
Shoemaker, Verna, 82, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 8. Spouse: Orval Shoemaker (deceased). Parents: Alvin and Emma Kauffman Springer (deceased). Survivors: daughter Ruby Brown; one grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.
Wiens, Jacob, 77, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Helene Dyck Wiens. Parents: Jacob and Katie Vogt Wiens (deceased). Other survivors: Donald, Arlen, Robert, Kenneth, Donata Gillen, Paul; 14 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.
Witmer, Robert, 40, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 1. Spouse Sharon Burkholder Witmer. Parents: Anna May Habecker (deceased) and Clyde Witmer. Other survivors: children Jenna, Heather, Deron, Mitchell. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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  If God is nudging you to find out more, please call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **The International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an immediate opening for a ***one-year voluntary service*** assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility, with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian, homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

  Contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email IGH-DC@juno.com.

- **Menno Haven Inc.** seeks a ***vice president of finance*** for a Mennonite church-related retirement community serving 1,000 residents. Individual will oversee all financial aspects of the organization. Candidate must be able to support our mission, corporate values, vision and Anabaptist principles. Bachelor's degree in business administration or accounting and at least five years of related health-care financial management experience preferred. CPA or MBA a plus.

  Qualified candidates should send resume, references and salary requirements to Chris Bumbaugh, Director of Human Resources, Menno Haven Inc., 1427 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201; 717-262-1000; fax 717-261-0860.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks ***wellness center director*** to open new wellness center in spring of 2000, and expand existing wellness program for VMRC residents, staff and community seniors. Candidate must have minimum of bachelor's degree, appropriate certifications and experience directing a wellness-fitness program for older adults and employees. Successful candidate will have strong marketing and research skills, ability to direct center operations, build networks and facilitate teamwork.

  Qualified candidates submit one-page letter describing wellness philosophy, resume and salary history to Director of Human Resources, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; fax 540-564-3700; email hr@vmrc.org; website www.vmrc.org.

- **Fresno Pacific University** seeks a qualified faculty member to teach in the ***Contemporary Christian Ministries*** (CCM) program, with the possibility of providing future direction for the program. Teaching in both CCM and biblical and religious studies programs. Mentoring and advising students in the CCM major. Beginning Aug. 15, 1999. Master's degree in appropriate field, with commitment to pursue a terminal degree such as a D. Min. or Ph.D. Fresno Pacific University is a dynamic Christian liberal arts college of the Mennonite Brethren Church. All candidates for faculty positions must share the college's Christian commitment.

  For full description and application form, write or phone Dr. Howard J. Loewen, provost, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Applications will be evaluated beginning March 1, 1999, and appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured.

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  For immediate consideration, send resume to Culinary Service Network Inc., 1730 Walton Road Suite 100, Blue Bell, PA 19422; fax 610-828-2328. EOE

- **Bluffton College** is seeking a ***campus ministries intern*** for the 1999-2000 academic year to work closely with the campus pastor in most areas of ministry on the Bluffton College campus. This position is intended for college graduates and/or seminary students seeking practical ministry experience in the campus setting. Arrangements could be made for obtaining internship credit. Consideration of applications will begin March 31, 1999, and continue until the position is filled.

  Please submit a letter of interest and resume to Randy Keeler, campus pastor, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. For additional information, see http://www.bluffton.edu. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE

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by Rich Preheim

Tormented in the flame

Three Church of the Brethren congregations, whose meeting places were either destroyed or heavily damaged by fires last year, have yet one more commonality: They were underinsured.

After a March fire roared through its sanctuary and did lesser damage to other parts of the building, First Church of the Brethren in Batavia, Ill., discovered that the structure was insured only for the depreciated value, not its replacement cost.

Pike Run Church of the Brethren in Somerset, Pa., destroyed by a January arson fire, was also not insured enough to erect a new building. Manchester Church of the Brethren, North Manchester, Ind., had enough insurance to replace the building it lost in a January fire. But the congregation still needs to pay for items to put in the new church.

"We were underinsured in our contents," North Manchester pastor Susan Stern Boyer tells *Messenger,* the denominational publication. "We wish we had done a better job on that. We lost our entire library."

But like enough gray clouds of smoke, there are silver linings. For example, when Pike Run wanted to make donations to each of the eight volunteer fire departments that responded to the blaze, the insurance company agreed to reimburse the church, even though that was not included in the policy.

Doing the right thing

Despite the legal risks, the United Church of Canada has formally apologized to indigenous Canadians—called First Nation peoples—for the denomination's complicity in physical, sexual and mental abuse inflicted at the church's Indian Residential Schools.

The move could have crippling results as the United Church of Canada faces claims from more than 100 former students. But the reason for the apology is simple, says *The Observer,* the denomination's magazine: Church leaders believed it was the right thing to do. "To feel repentance and take no action achieves nothing," says executive committee member Phyllis Smyth.

The church has since instructed its lawyers in one case to focus on settlement negotiations.

In making the apology, moderator Bill Phipps said: "We are aware of some of the damage that this cruel and ill-conceived system of assimilation has perpetrated on Canada's First Nation peoples. For this we are truly and most humbly sorry."

Empty cradle syndrome

In the very region where Christianity was born, the religion is becoming an endangered species, reports *Context,* offering a litany of supporting numbers:

Christians make up an estimated 2 percent to 4 percent of the populations of Jordan, Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza, and 10 percent of Syria. Lebanon, at one time the only country in the Middle East with more Christians than Muslims, is now only 30 percent to 40 percent Christian. East Jerusalem, nearly 50 percent Christian 40 years ago, is now less than 5 percent. The number of Jordanians professing Christianity has dropped by half since 1967, and in Iraq, that number has dropped from 750,000 to 500,000 in the last nine years. A Syrian Orthodox monastery in northern Iraq which once housed 7,000 monks now has two.

The reason for the decline in numbers is not persecution by the increasing Muslim majority. In fact, according to *Context,* Christians are generally treated well in the region. But Christians more and more say they cannot financially afford to stay and look to emigrate whenever possible.

From top to bottom

The 20-foot cross atop the bell tower of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Arlington, Va., isn't just a traditional Christian symbol. It is also a source of income, raising $45,000 a year for missions, reports *The Lutheran.* Cellular phone antennas are concealed in the cross. Desperate for higher ground of a nonspiritual sort, phone companies are increasingly looking to churches for sites—and are willing to pay big money for them. St. Paul uses the money for new church programs, charity and outreach.

Meanwhile, Zion Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pa., has plumbed the depths of church life. The congregation recently dismantled a Cold War-era fallout shelter in the church basement. The space will be used for storage.

Blasts from the past

The Council of Evangelical Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD) has been one of many organizations responding to the devastation left by Hurricane Mitch last fall. But in addition to the usual problems is a new one, says *CEPAD Report.* Flooding has left the Nicaraguan Army unable to verify the locations of 76,000 land mines planted during the country's civil war in the 1980s.

Tidbits

- Lambeth, the international Anglican conference held every 10 years, last year called on dioceses to give 0.7 percent of their income to international development programs. —*The Witness*
- The funeral for James Dean, the 1950s movie star and cultural icon, was held in a Quaker meetinghouse in Fairmount, Ind. —*Quaker Life*
- Of the 75,129 Catholic nuns in the United States, 36,651 are more than 70 years old. Only 623 are between the ages of 25 and 50.—*National Catholic Reporter*
- Since 1992, 228 Hispanic United Methodist congregations have been started in the United States. —*Christian Century*

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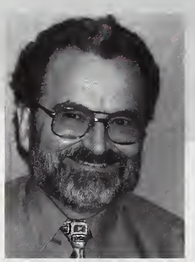

J. Lorne Peachey

What they teach at our Mennonite schools

If anyone is biased in favor of Mennonite education, it has to be me: Grades 1-12 at Belleville (Pa.) Mennonite School; a bachelor's degree from Eastern Mennonite College (now University), Harrisonburg, Va.; a year of taking courses for fun—no degree or diploma—at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (now Seminary), Elkhart, Ind.

So what do I remember from these hours in Mennonite classrooms? Not much, I must confess. Oh, occasionally I go back to my grammar textbook to bolster my side of the argument when the staff of this publication can't agree on where to put a comma or which word to use. But most of the details of my Mennonite education have long since been forgotten.

What I haven't forgotten are the people. Those who taught me. And those who lived their Christian lives day by day in front of me.

There was Alphie Zook, the principal who met me in the hall when I was trying to decide if I could add Spanish to an already crowded junior high schedule. "Of course, you can do it!" Alphie said—words I still remember when confronted with the impossible.

At Mennonite schools, faculty expertise and skills also blend with concerns for spiritual well-being, all in the context of values Anabaptist-Mennonites believe important.

There was Laura Weaver, the high school teacher who opened up the world of literature and grammar for me. She also was the one who convinced me I could write.

At college, Ruth Breckbill taught me a love for words—and to be precise when I use them. Irvin B. Horst liked a book review I wrote well enough to suggest to the student newspaper editor that I might be an addition to the staff. That's how I got my first taste of journalism.

The next year, Ellrose Zook, on leave as executive editor for the Mennonite Church, was my faculty adviser when I edited the EMC *Weathervane.* From Ellrose I got the vision for using writing and editing for the church.

And I remember my profs from seminary: Jacob Enz and Millard Lind, who taught me how to read the Old Testament; Howard Charles, who did the same for the New; and John H. Yoder, who pushed me to think harder than I had ever thought before—and from that prodding came the only book I've ever written.

All these—and many other professors—were interested in more than passing on facts or discussing ideas. They wanted me to grow as a person, particularly as a person in relationship with Jesus Christ. They may not have been quite as formal about it as Gerald Biesecker-Mast writes about Bluffton (Ohio) College, where faculty and staff regularly discuss the spiritual and intellectual development of their students (see page 4). But I always had before me models for how to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. And mentors for how to put my faith into practice in my daily life.

That does not mean these people were perfect; our schools are not run by saints. In my 17 years of Mennonite education, I also came across examples of how not to live. Happily, that list is shorter—and will remain private.

Of course, there is concern about individual development and helpful faculty-student interaction at other schools, even those that aren't built around Christian values. I'll always treasure what I learned from Roland Wolseley about writing and from Robert Root about editing during my graduate education at Syracuse (N.Y.) University. But at Mennonite schools, faculty expertise and skills are also blended with concerns for spiritual well-being.

On Sunday, Feb. 7, the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church observe Church School Day. Likely there will be comparisons of Mennonite education with that available from other schools. There may also be arguments about whether Mennonite schools help or hinder students in their faith, such as those that sent Gerald Biesecker-Mast to a non-Mennonite college.

But we would observe Church School Day better by reflecting on what it is our Mennonite schools do best. For me, they provided models that helped me find my way in the church and in the world. These mentors believed, understood and practiced Christian values that we Anabaptist-Mennonites believe important. That is what they teach well at our Mennonite schools.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

February 9, 1999

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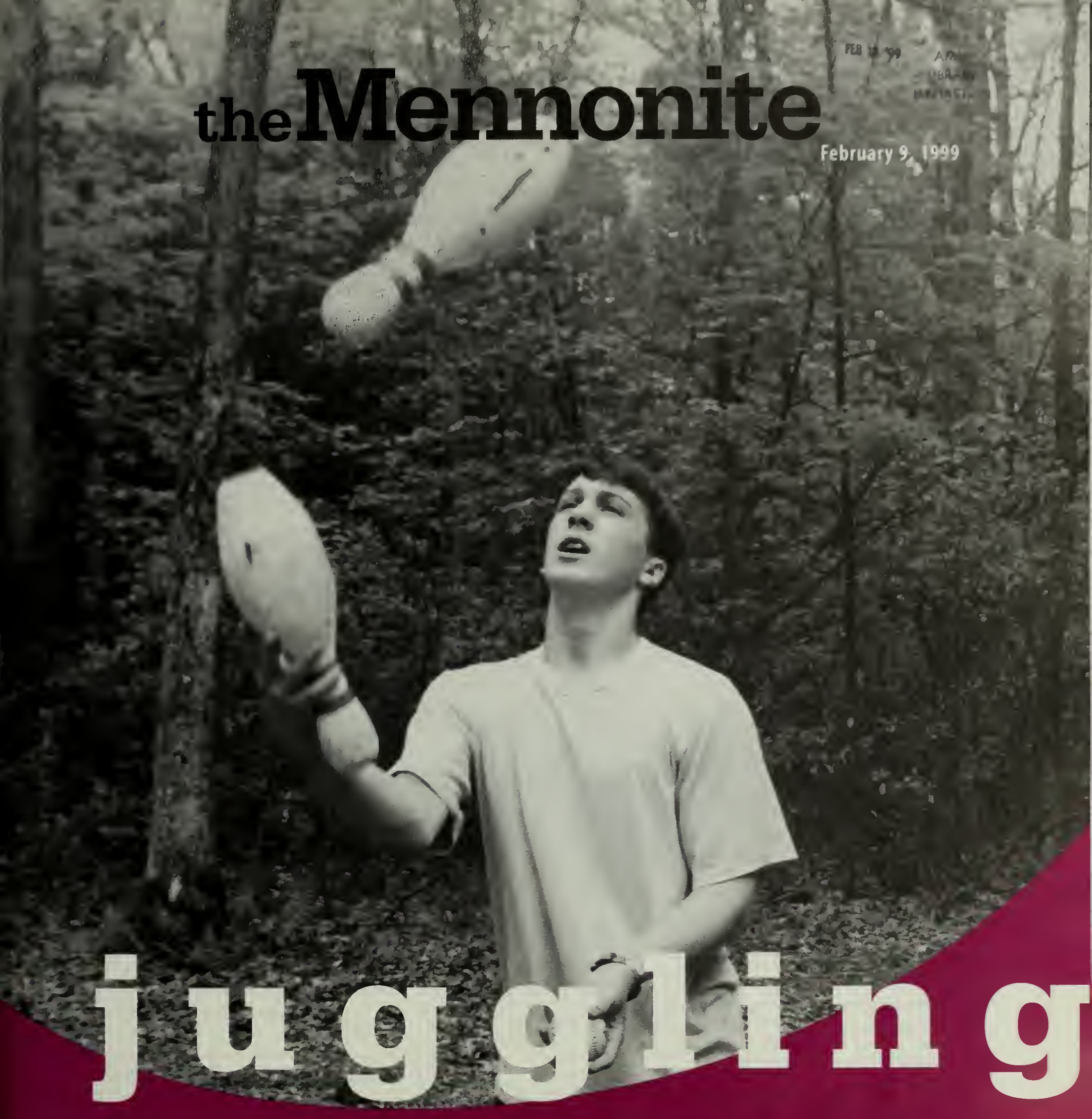

juggling

Mennonite integration

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10 Toward greater global mission partnership
11 Longtime educator has her Jubilee
19 Reconsider the two-country structure

Homosexuality and the church

Thanks for the breadth of articles related to lesbians and gays in Mennonite churches (Jan. 19 and Jan. 26). I have difficulty with John D. Roth's Jan. 26 article, "Clarity, Charity and Compassion," in two primary ways. First, I believe the church, regardless of denomination or theological persuasion, historically has appealed to and utilized Scripture, tradition, experience and reason in discerning the will of God for any given time and place. This is the faith in which I was nurtured within the Anabaptist-Mennonite community. I am puzzled why Roth treats the role of experience in spiritual discernment as if it is some individual or privatized thing. The homosexuality issue presents itself before the church as a phenomenon of human experience, not the personal whims of isolated people.

Second, I disagree with Roth's assertion that "sexual rights" is used as "authority" by those who welcome gays into the church. This is a justice issue, to be sure. But as a justice issue, it is an extension of the role of human experience, not a separate "authority." When people are denied their full place within the faith community, it is not surprising that misconceptions occur. The basic reason experience is such a critical need within the church's struggle in these days is that it is the only way in which the justice issues will get addressed.

I long for the day when people, regardless of sexual orientation, are not only permitted but invited to write articles in our church publications about faith issues in which they have a personal stake. I am more hopeful today because I believe strongly in what J. Lorne Peachey wrote in his Jan. 26 editorial, "The Spirit continues to call us to unity." May God bless the Mennonite churches.—*Richard J. Lichty, Hatfield, Pa.*

Thanks to John D. Roth for a thoughtful weighing of authorities important for the church's discernment on homosexuality (Jan. 19 and Jan. 26). But by focusing on the potential negatives in his comments on personal experience, he unduly diminishes an important element of discernment as modeled in the New Testament. While I am sure that Scripture, tradition and context were all part of the Jerusalem Conference debate of Acts 15:7, what was most decisive was hearing from Peter, Paul and Barnabas how they saw the Holy Spirit working in the lives of Gentile believers. In our current Mennonite debates, where are we listening for the stories of how the Spirit is at work in the lives of the gays and lesbians among us?—*Sally Weaver Glick, Goshen, Ind.*

While I read with interest John D. Roth's argument in support of the church position regarding homosexuality, I do find his appeals to Scripture and Christian tradition rather weak. The case made against Galileo, who dared to offer a radical view of the order of the universe, was well-supported by Scripture and Christian tradition. The same could be said for slavery in the 19th century.

While I concede that analytical, researched and ostensibly noninflammatory rhetoric such as Roth puts forth in his article is inevitable in any debate over homosexuality, I don't think it will ultimately prove useful. We all come to these debates with a gut reaction to the issue, an emotional opinion. Homosexuality either seems wrong to us or it doesn't. Let us not be deceived. Thoughtful, reasoned arguments won't change any views. They are constructed to support a position. For those who agree with Roth, his article will offer further support and affirmation for their feelings about lesbian and gay Christians. For those who disagree, and certainly for lesbian and gay Mennonites, his words are indeed inflammatory and divisive. —*Paul J. Helmuth Jr., Northampton, Mass.*

Without entering into polemics on who is and who isn't outside the church, I need to question the conclusion of Weldon Nisly regarding the larger perspective when he states, "[The church] dares to hear Peter proclaim, 'God has clearly shown me that no one should be considered unclean or an outsider' " ("Homosexuality and the Healing of the Church," Jan. 19).

Jesus is clear on the subject in Revelation 22:15 when he said, "Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood." It is clear that an inside and an outside exist. May God grant us grace to align ourselves with this revealed perspective of the Lord of the church and to seek his help in discerning the difference.—*Joel H. Hackman, Telford, Pa.*

I can imagine the fear and trembling in every aspect of the Jan. 19 issue. I can imagine the criticisms you will have already received. But I credit your bravery and trust in a church that is continuing to work out its salvation. Thank you for both John Roth's reasoned and gentle exposition and for Weldon Nisly's challenge to

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

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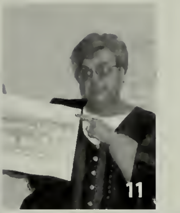

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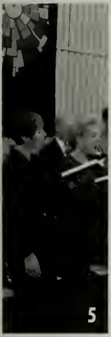

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readers say

get unstuck. I pray that their thoughts and our responses might lead us forward toward the grace and power of God's salvation.—*Wayne Speigle, Richmond, Va.*

I am very troubled by what *The Mennonite* is doing with the homosexuality question. The Jan. 19 issue is an example of once again polarizing people. You will undoubtedly be flooded with letters to the editor, expressing pro and con reactions to the articles. I beg you not to print them. Dialogue does not happen in a paper with people boldly expressing their views from a distance. Dialogue happens when people meet people, when the approach is not from "white knuckles and high blood pressure" to quote John D. Roth ("Binding and Loosing," Jan. 19) but from heart and soul. I am incredibly disappointed that *The Mennonite* continues to see itself as a vehicle for debate on the issue.

Could you be bold enough as editor to close the debate, to stop printing letters and write an editorial encouraging dialogue, discussion, conversation at the local level instead? Continue to print articles by our leading church theologians, but suggest that they be used as a springboard for dialogue in Christian education classes, small groups, etc., along with other resources such as the video *Body of Consent* and the book *From Wounded Hearts.* Dialogue —this is what we say we will do in our church sexuality statement—must have eye-to-eye contact for any real discerning of the Spirit to happen.—*Gwen Peachey, Ephrata, Pa.*

We are requesting you take our name off the mailing list for *The Mennonite.* We no longer want to receive this publication in our home. The repeated articles on homosexuality are repulsive and sick. Frankly, we are embarrassed to be associated with this magazine. —*Dale and Marj Martin, Greentown Ind.*

Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt

MCC photo by Mark Beach

The heart of our "Mennonite-ness" ... is our belief that the kingdom of God is here.

—Joan L. Hockman "The Kingdom of God Is Here," Jan. 5

The war continues

I am disappointed in the lack of attention given in *The Mennonite* to our genocide of the Iraqi people. People look to *The Mennonite* for information and guidance about issues that concern our spiritual growth and our lives as followers of Christ. Our country's hate toward our brothers and sisters in Iraq is such an issue.

We declared war against the people of Iraq in 1991, and that war continues eight years later through sanctions and our most recent attacks. As citizens of this country, we have on our hands the blood of more than 1.5 million Iraqis who have died as a result of sanctions and bombings since 1991. If there is any other event that tests us as Christians and pacifists, it is the killing that is carried out in our names.

This is a request for guidance through our Mennonite publication but also a challenge for us all to resist. I hope that as people who pride themselves on nonviolence, we can publicly speak out against this genocide and allow the teachings of Jesus to get us into a lot of trouble.—*Andy Peifer, Hartford, Conn.*

Core of Mennonite identity

As we approach integration, we are all seeking to identify more clearly what the central force is which pulls us together as a connected community. Joan L. Hockman does that beautifully in just two pages ("The Kingdom of God Is Here," Jan. 5). Rather than continued bickering over boundary issues, let's focus on the core identity of the church we are re-creating. Of course it includes our belief in the Bible. But its many passages are subject to wide interpretation. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective concisely describes what we believe as an Anabaptist church. But for purposes of condensing it into a form which could be used as a brochure to communicate with the world what it is which we believe makes Mennonites special, Hockman's short piece does it well. Let us hold up the values of love, service, global awareness, peace and justice, and community as the core identity which brings us together.—*Jim Rugh, Atlanta*

Gleaning and begging

"Building Up the Campuses" (Nov. 10, 1998) stirred many conflicting thoughts and feelings within me. My partner, Vera, and I are charged with the task of helping the 133,000 people of Ethiopia's Meserete Kristos Church, a poor sister to the rich American Mennonites, to build up their first campus.

This whole denomination does not know the benefit of having even one complete elementary or secondary school. When the church decided to open its first college to provide some basic training on the tertiary level for its evangelists and pastors, it could barely scrape together enough funds to rent a simple compound in a rundown section of town. Students during the first year didn't even have beds to sleep on. The smells of a dysfunctional sewer permeated the sleeping quarters. Now they have beds and the sewer has been repaired, but these men of God are still sleeping 20 to a room.

Vera and I spent three months last summer contacting people in the United States and Canada to raise funds for the college. Our goal was $900,000. We found ourselves gleaning the droppings where the giants with their professional teams of development officers had already harvested the big bucks. We were intimidated by the mega projects in progress: $4 million church sanctuaries, $27 million retirement complexes, a $22 million university commons on the campus that once challenged us with the Anabaptist-Mennonite vision of Christian stewardship, an $8 million sports complex for one of our 16 over-endowed and over-furbished Mennonite high schools.

Some have suggested it would be a first step toward rectifying the growing imbalance between rich and poor Christians if First-World congregations and church institutions would give 10 percent of their building fund-raising harvest to their sister churches in the Third World. Even 1 percent of what was mentioned in the article would put up a very fine campus in Ethiopia, a goal our "begging" failed to reach.—*Carl E. Hansen, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

Caravanning with Abraham and Sarah

"Abraham and Sarah's Spiritual Descendants Still Multiplying as Church Planting Nears Goal" (Jan. 5) reminded me of the unforgettable experience when our Abraham and Sarah Caravan of six spent a week serving at Joy Mennonite Church in Oklahoma City in 1994. We worked in the neighborhood doing painting, shingling, maintenance jobs and visitation. We also conducted a family craft and activity day and sorted clothes at the city's Rest Homeless Day Center. On Sunday we were in charge of the morning worship and welcomed some of those for whom we had painted, shingled and visited. Since then, receiving the Joy Mennonite newsletter each month reminds us of our mission.—*Elda Bachman, North Newton, Kan.*

Diversity

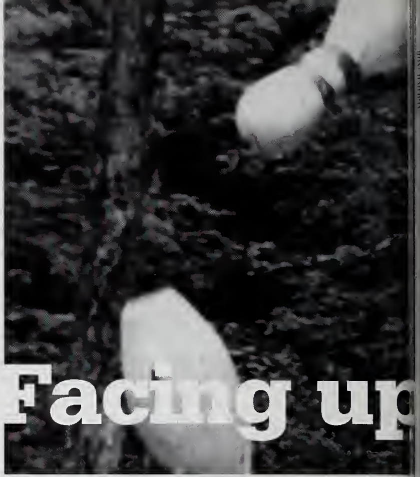
by Debra Gingerich

Peter Bartel—for illustration only

The Lord is my sh

Mennonites know something
about beauty. There may be
no hand-carved crucifix, no
gold-dipped Jesus, no colored
glass that pulls the sun in
to shine opaque designs
on carved cherry pews.
My uncle sings high and
visible in tenor, with his head
cocked slightly to the right,
as if the sound is coming to him
from above. And I learned young
that I would never match my mother's
soprano, how it curved about
the voices in our country
fellowship, too small to be called
a church. I accepted alto and
listened for the sounds of
other women drifting below
the melody, like shadowing
on a pencil sketch. No one had
to tell me that God somehow
can hear, that he loves four-
part harmony—voices never
could fit together like that
otherwise. And when the octet
serenades those who sit
through weddings and funerals
on the straight birch benches
of Lowville Mennonite Church,
just the way their parents
sang, just like the congregation
on Sunday morning, their voices
sweep like paint brushes along
the white-washed walls, with more
color than eyes could ever see.
And we should have known
that folks who once all wore that
same cut dress, the same plain
coat couldn't also sing in unison.
Somehow I had to be told that
we are not all made alike.

Debra Gingerich lives in Lancaster, Pa.



Facing up to our differences

by Jim Schrag

We have failed to cast the call of God to us in the right tones. We have worried more about structures than about Christ's people and their mission housed in those structures.

Our integration process has not been perfect, yet it has been used by God. Nevertheless, our process has been miscast and misnamed. Integration presupposed greater similarities than existed, presupposed that the best of each group could somehow be combined. We have learned painfully how inadequate this approach has become. It required us to trot out the best of our traditions, then wonder why we could not go further when the best did not fit together and we were unable to make choices between each other's finest. Thus competition, not cooperation, has been built into what we have been attempting to do in integration.

Unity cannot be achieved by glossing over differences. Unity comes only by accepting differences as a part of God's intention. Such notions are not the way of the world but the essence of the body language and imagery of the New Testament.

Likewise we have developed our affections for one another at different paces. Trust is not built in long-distance relationships or in unequal commitments. We still suffer from lack of knowledge of each other. What we know of each other often still smacks of caricature and conjecture.

We have tried to avoid it, but realignment must now be faced in new ways. Now we must seriously consider the issues that divide us, that want to place us in new, separate groups.

In our stress on unity we have overemphasized our similarities. We must now clearly and courageously gaze upon what I call the specter of new division (realignment) and ask if this is what God desires for us. Until we do that, we will only continue to flirt with, not embrace, true newness in the church. Without examining these more negative alternatives, unity will continue to elude us. It will not be an easy discussion.

Most of this admonition comes from having looked at the membership question, which for many cannot seem to unhitch itself from weighty issues of sexuality and morality. In this connection, and with the addition of differing views of the proper pace of the integration process, I have found myself trying to hold hope together with realism, and integrity with accuracy, so that the right and left hand can work together.

We are one body with many members (1 Corinthians 12:12). Unity cannot be achieved by glossing over differences. Unity comes only by accepting differences as a part of God's intention. Such notions are not the way of the world but the essence of the body language and imagery of the New Testament. The polity of embracing differences is a faithful polity when enacted in the name of Christ.

I am hoping for a revival. I hope there is confession and new beginnings. There needs to be a new dependency on God for our direction, not on our own wisdom or on our imperfect traditions.

Jim Schrag is General Conference Mennonite Church general secretary and U.S. integration team leader. This article is excerpted from a presentation he made to the GCMC General Board in November 1998.

Eager to become more

by Bernie Wiebe

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. … For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
—Isaiah 55:1,12

Isaiah 55 communicates like a global Psalm. It is a hymn celebrating the good life offered by God. Isaiah is amazed that people run in the rat race of money and hard work—but there is so little satisfaction and so much emptiness.

Isaiah speaks of places where water is a rare commodity and its sale in the streets a big deal. Yet there is universal access. What does this mean today, when the wealth of the world's richest 150 people equals that of the world's poorest 3 billion?

Isaiah speaks to Israel in Babylon, whose people are resigned to captivity with souls run dry. Isaiah says: Folks, you don't have to settle for emptiness, yearning, anxiety and depression. God is eager to fill your deepest longings.

As I work on a university campus and serve in churches, I sense a malaise. We have stresses with our youth, strains in our families and apprehension in our churches. But God's amazing grace, says the apostle Paul, is sufficient in our times of greatest need. Isaiah agrees.

As God's grace penetrates our lives, it makes us eager to become more. It connects us with the "that of God" residing in all people and in all situations.

We know God's Spirit wants to lead us into spiritual encounters we have not yet had. Our people told us they want to integrate—and the votes were not by narrow margins. But it has been a painful time since the vote at Wichita '95, at Winnipeg '97 and Orlando '97 (together with parallel affirmations by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada). Each of our systems is solid and rational. And God's Spirit has used these well. We keep trying to build common systems that can serve Mennonite Church U.S. and Mennonite Church Canada.

Can the malaise about integration in the hearts of many of our people be addressed even now? Isaiah hinted at two measuring criteria for us today: Are we eager to become more than builders of institutions and organizations like we had before? Are we willing to become more than beggars for budgets?

We have been on the integration journey for years. I hear too little excitement about it. If we believe that integration means more than simply a larger aggregate of members, programs, staff and budgets; if we believe in the filling, the fullness that Isaiah promises, and communicate that, then the integration current will grow into an energy that can only multiply.

People are eager to become more. Can we go into each congregation and invite people to a new spiritual banquet? That banquet may mean we join all our Mennonite energies and resources into one great spiritual mission.

If we believe that integration means more than simply a larger aggregate of members, programs, staff and budgets; if we believe in the filling, the fullness that Isaiah promises, and communicate that, then the integration current will grow into an energy that can only multiply.

Can we help people catch the vision or the experience of joyful giving—both of ourselves and of our money? Paul tells us God loves cheerful givers. Some versions translate the word for "cheerful" as "hilarious."

Remember the last budget discussion in your church or conference? How many times have you heard someone thank God that your church or conference challenges us to give more money to our congregation, conference or school? How many times have you heard thanks expressed that we can serve on boards and committees, teach Sunday school, lead the youth group or visit the sick and those in prison?

The "hilarious" spirit of giving and serving in the church speaks to all who are eager to become more. I dream with Isaiah of the day

I dream with Isaiah of the day when we don't spend on what doesn't satisfy but have half our congregational members pleading with local church and conference finance committees to raise budgets and give more opportunities to participate in the hilarity of giving our money and our being. I dream of each believer becoming more involved in letting God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

when we don't spend on what doesn't satisfy but have half our congregational members pleading with local church and conference finance committees to raise budgets and give more opportunities to participate in the hilarity of giving our money and our being. I dream of each believer becoming more involved in letting God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

I dream of that day when all my Mennonite brothers and sisters direct our energies, our prayers and our vision of healing and hope at the needs and opportunities to change the world around us. Integration will be only an early, small step as we together show the world that we are eager to become more.

Bernie Wiebe is assistant moderator for the General Conference Mennonite Church. This article is excerpted from a meditation he gave to the joint general boards in Winnipeg in November 1998.

Integration that is theologically and missionally correct

by John C. Murray

One of the opportunities provided by the integration of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church is to reflect on how effectively our structures address various issues.

Racism was one of the important issues the delegate body asked the general boards and the Integration Committee to address. This is a challenging issue because both attitudes and organizational structure affect it. Even if the desire of our heart is to be anti-racist, organizational structures may hinder true inclusion of racial diversity. The best organizational structure will not be effective if we harbor racist attitudes. Both our attitudes and our structures must be transformed.

The Integration Committee met with representatives from various racial and ethnic backgrounds on Sept. 24-25, 1998. The interchange was helpful and enlightening. In response to these conversations the Integration Committee articulated some initial directions for the new denomination. Certainly, those racial or ethnic groups that have developed organizational structures and ministries need to be closely linked to the denominational governance structures. But that alone is not adequate. Racial and ethnic groups not formally organized also have important voices the church must hear. The diversity within each cultural community cannot be represented by one voice or one gender. Those who make up the new denomination must be committed to cross-cultural ministries. This involvement cannot merely be defined in terms of connections to governance structures but in mutual relationship and ministry.

As I read responses to the reports of the Integration Committee's meeting with racial and ethnic groups, I was troubled by the response that we were merely being "politically correct" and that this should not be the concern of the new church.

This is not about being politically correct; it is about being missionally correct. We increasingly experience the reality that cross-cultural ministry does not only happen when Christians cross the boundaries of nations and con-

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This is not about being politically correct; it is about being missionally correct. . . . This is not about being politically correct; it is about being theologically complete. . . . This is not about being politically correct; it is about being anatomically complete.

tinents. Cross-cultural ministry happens within our borders. If a local cross-cultural ministry is to avoid being paternalistic and find effective means to proclaim the gospel in the context of various cultures, then its mission must flow from an intentionally cross-cultural organization.

This is not about being politically correct; it is about being theologically complete. In John 1:43-46, Philip invites Nathaniel to come and meet Jesus. Nathaniel replies, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” His prejudice nearly cost him the opportunity to encounter Jesus. Sometimes our prejudice is that blatant. Sometimes it is more subtle. But even subtle and sophisticated forms of prejudice lead to the exclusion of other races. In turn we will miss encounters with Jesus and what Jesus is doing in and through people of other races and cultures.

This is not about being politically correct; it is about being anatomically complete. The body of Christ includes people from all tribes, tongues and nations. If our denomination is to reflect the fullness of the body of Christ, then it must intentionally include a broad representation of races and cultures.

When the general boards decided to move integration forward through two country structures, Dwight McFadden, an African-American, was chairing the meeting. Adam Liu, of Chinese descent, led in prayer before the decision was made. I hope this is a sign of the cross-cultural nature of the new denomination.

However, the general boards are overwhelmingly white male groups. And it is this group that must dissolve itself to form a new organizational structure in which white males will not have all the control we have been so used to wielding. We must divest ourselves of enough power that we do not put people of other racial and ethnic groups in the position of having to compete with one another for the limited connections with the new denomination. I pray we will have the courage to divest ourselves of that control and in the process discover the joy of the completeness of the body of Christ in the fullness of the Spirit.

John C. Murray is co-chair of the Integration Committee. This article is adapted from comments he made to the joint general boards in Winnipeg in November 1998.

Make 1999 a year of Jubilee

by Charles B. Shenk

The Prince of Peace brings us the ministry of reconciliation. His identity and our task are made clear for us. But peace often eludes us, not only on the world scene but within our Christian community. Where Jesus crosses boundaries to include, we set up boundaries that exclude and divide.

Over the years we have staked out positions from which we brand other people or groups or conferences as wrong or unfaithful or even evil. Personal animosity and divisions result. The body of Christ is broken, its identity and character compromised. Individuals lose spiritual, even physical, vitality. We become our worst selves rather than our best. We do and say scandalous things to and about each other.

While negative attitudes toward others sometimes arise from real theological or ideological differences, they often come from misinformation, misunderstanding and lack of respect. At any rate, Jesus, the head of the church, does not want us to continue in such destructive ways of relating.

The year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25) calls for land to be returned to original owners and for those who had become slaves to be released. Freedom and equality are to be restored among the people of God.

What if we declared the year 1999 a year of spiritual Jubilee? Intentionally and with God’s help we can put away ill feeling where relationships have failed or are strained. We can cease to exercise control or judgment over those with whom we disagree, and we can cease to elevate ourselves or our opinions by putting others down.

Such a Jubilee would bring a new atmosphere into our relationships, restored freedom and equality and mutual respect. Rifts in the body could heal. We would be free to be our best selves again, and the Prince of Peace could receive glory from his church.

Without some such Jubilee celebration and restoration, I fear we of the North American Mennonite churches will be in poor shape to take the next steps in integration. May the Spirit of God anoint our spirits.

Charles B. Shenk, a retired missionary to Japan, lives in Columbus, Ohio.

If a local cross-cultural ministry is to avoid being paternalistic and find effective means to proclaim the gospel in the context of various cultures, then its mission must flow from an intentionally cross-cultural organization.

North American agencies approve step toward greater global mission partnership

We want to move toward actually sharing the decision making and goal setting.

—Peter Rempel

TECHNY, Ill.—Leaders of North American Mennonite mission agencies have talked for two decades about increasing global partnership and accountability with churches around the world. Now they have decided to boost the talk to a more strategic level.

The Council of International Ministries (CIM), at its annual gathering Jan. 23-24 in Techny, Ill., approved plans for a Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation, to be held July 12-15, 2000, in Bogotá, Colombia, in conjunction with a meeting of the Mennonite World Conference General Council. It is expected to draw 250 participants, half of them MWC General Council members. The goal of the consultation is to achieve more collaboration and partnership on each continent and to get a better handle on the gifts the global community brings to a common Mennonite mission and how they might be deployed.

CIM is made up of 22 U.S. and Canadian Mennonite mission and service agencies.

"We want to move toward actually sharing the decision making and goal setting for global missions with Anabaptist churches around the world," said Peter Rempel, CIM executive secretary.

Some meeting participants expressed hesitancy about the consultation, noting the logistics of decision making on a global scale and the role of current agencies in new models. But Mennonite Board of Missions president Stanley Green said he was "thrilled that we're moving beyond simply talking about it."

The consultation was proposed at last year's CIM annual meeting. A committee has since refined the proposed format in response to requests for strong worship and celebration components.

Two MWC leaders in attendance this year affirmed a need for global partnerships. "Many years ago you missionaries came to us with white bread, and we accepted it with graciousness," said MWC vice president Bedru Hussein of Ethiopia, quoting a fellow Ethiopian. "Now it's time for you to accept some brown bread."

MWC president Mesach Krisetya noted that countries that used to be the target of missions are now becoming the initiators. He called for a new arena where Mennonite bodies could relate to each other and where "the miracle of partnership" could be facilitated.

Krisetya suggested such an entity be called Anabaptist Forum for Facilitation of International and Regional Mission, or AFFIRM.

Questions arose about the role MWC should play in developing these global partnerships. Krisetya acknowledged that MWC was not a mission agency nor was it ever meant to be. Nonetheless, he said, it is "the only international Anabaptist agency where agencies can relate and develop vision with equal interdependence."

For its part, MWC has put together a tentative proposal to help create a permanent arena for all Anabaptists engaged in international mission or service to meet, and to do so by the next MWC world assembly, scheduled for Africa in 2003. This arena, said MWC general secretary Larry Miller, could take the shape of a forum, council, federation, alliance, alliance of alliances or a combination of several patterns.

"The Spirit will lead and time will tell," Miller said.—*Wally Kroeker for Meetinghouse*

Jim Bishop

Light against the darkness

Eastern Mennonite University juniors Shyleen Wesley from New York City (left) and Fikir Tilahun from Beltsville, Md., light a candle before venturing outside on the cold, breezy evening of Jan. 18 for a vigil on the Harrisonburg, Va., campus in commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The vigil, one of a variety of activities at EMU and at Mennonite schools across the country, gave students the opportunity to reflect on King's life, work and legacy.

Longtime educator has her Jubilee

Curriculum director retires from 'exciting time of life'

NEWTON, Kan.—After six years as director of children's ministries for the Commission on Education (COE), Rosella Wiens Regier was preparing to take a sabbatical in 1990—an Anabaptist heritage tour of Europe with her husband.

But before she left, Norma Johnson, then executive secretary of COE, took Regier out for breakfast and proposed the unexpected: Would Regier be the executive director of a new inter-Anabaptist children's curriculum?

"I had been one of four [General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ and Church of the Brethren] reps that had been meeting periodically to work on a vision for a new curriculum," Regier says. "I was floored when Norma asked me.

"Norma said, 'Think about it and call me from Zurich.' So I did. As I walked along the Limmat River and looked at the cathedral, I thought about the many who had lived and died for their faith here. It's become increasingly important to me that I made a decision and accepted a challenge in Zurich as well."

That new Sunday school curriculum became the popular Jubilee: God's Good News. Now more than nine years later, Regier is making another change and taking a sort of Jubilee of her own. She retired at the end of January as the project's executive director.

"It's been an incredibly exciting time of my life," she says. "I was working 70- to 80-hour weeks, but I wasn't tired. I'd come in at 5 a.m. because I couldn't sleep—I was so excited about what I was doing. I was having a ball. And it was a miracle it all came together."

Ninety-five percent positive: Jubilee made its first appearance five years ago. "After the first quarter of 1994, we got 450 evaluations from teachers. That's a phenomenal number," Regier says. "All they had to do was make eight checkmarks, but people wrote volumes on the back of the sheet. Through tabulation, we realized that the comments were 95 percent positive."

The first cycle of Jubilee use, which covers early childhood through eighth grade, was completed in 1997. Since then, Regier has been setting up revision systems, working on a summer Sunday school curriculum and taking part in initial meetings about the next new children's Sunday school curriculum, which will begin development in 2006.

Regier first became involved in churchwide Christian education in the 1970s, when she wrote curriculum for Foundation Series, the predecessor to Jubilee, and did teacher training. Church work became Regier's vocation in 1984. She was teaching elementary school in Walton, Kan., when she became director of children's ministries for COE. During that time she led the development of Venture Clubs for children.

Regier says education has been her calling since she was 16 years old. "I was a junior in high school, at the Bethel [Mennonite] Church in Inman [Kan.], and they asked me to teach the kindergarten Sunday school class for the 1950-51 term," she says. "I just had a ball.

"It was amazing to me. My church trusted me with that task. I view it as a gift the church gave me at that point. I've pretty much been teaching ever since."

She taught school near Inman during her years at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and at Elkhart, Ind., when her husband, Harold, attended Mennonite Biblical Seminary (now Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary).

Teaching themes: After Harold graduated from seminary, the Regiers went to Gulfport, Miss., where Harold previously had been a voluntary service worker. They spent most of the next decade there, and Regier, of course, devoted a majority of her time to teaching.

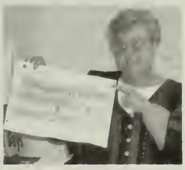
"In the summer, I directed vacation Bible school for more than 1,000 kids," she says. "We did orientations for teachers and summer VSers. I helped to start a community library—this was the early '60s and black children couldn't use the public library. I taught Bible classes ... and directed recreation at the community center."

But teaching was not the only theme of the Gulfport years as the civil rights movement was spreading across the South. Her only stint of teaching public school at Gulfport came in 1969. "It was the first year of forced integration, and white teachers were resigning in droves," Regier says.

The Regiers, who by then had added a son and a daughter to their family, returned to Kansas in 1971, when Harold became peace and social concerns secretary for the Commission on Home Ministries in Newton.

Now that she is retired, Regier has no plans to slow down, except for an upcoming vacation with Harold to Padre Island on the Texas coast. "I may travel for the Church of the Brethren, representing Jubilee in their congregations," she says. "I've been asked to produce the fourth in a series of Jubilee supplement videos, to be a storyteller for Western District Conference. I plan to spend lots of time playing with my [two] grandchildren. And I need to clean closets."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher



I was having a ball. And it was a miracle it all came together.

—Rosella Wiens Regier

One in a million

Since the Jubilee children's Sunday school curriculum was introduced in 1994, 1.05 million student pieces have been sold, plus 200,000 teacher's guides.

Jubilee is published by the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Brethren in Christ and Church of the Brethren. The Mennonite Brethren and Friends United Meeting are cooperative users.

Eight-five percent of Mennonite Church and 70 percent of General Conference Mennonite Church congregations currently use Jubilee materials.

Despite communication, transportation obstacles, MDS response in Puerto Rico gains momentum

AIBONITO, Puerto Rico—It was a cool January night in Puerto Rico. At least cool for the local denizens. But it was quite enjoyable for the group of Ohio teenagers who were chuckling at the news of cold, snowy weather plaguing their friends and family back home.

Thirteen students from Central Christian High School, Kidron, Ohio, spent 10 days last month on the island, serving with Mennonite Disaster Service. MDS has started a long-term response in Puerto Rico in the wake of the September 1998 assault of Hurricane Georges, the worst hurricane to hit the island in 60 years.

"Besides learning to roof and do construction work, one thing I learned from people here is how they take time to talk and enjoy one another's company," says student Joel Miller. "I realized that we take our neighbors for granted and people we know well back in the States."

MDS is focusing on the center of the island, around the town of Aibonito, a hilly and mountainous area where narrow and curvy roads make travel an ordeal. Finding transportation and communication were difficulties early on. Project coordinator Merle Sommers and a handful of long-term workers from the United States arrived in Puerto Rico last November, two months after the hurricane hit. But telephone service wasn't fully restored until the end of December, making communication with MDS headquarters in Akron, Pa., difficult.

Transportation was recently improved after the Florida MDS unit purchased three vehicles and shipped them to Puerto Rico and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided two more vehicles.

It's not like a localized tornado in the States where one community is destroyed and you only set up in that community.

—Merle Sommers

MDS photo by Marisa Doncevic

Mennonite Disaster Service workers and brothers Joel (left) and Reagan Dyck of Burns Lake, B.C., pour cement for the new house for Domingo Mendez in Aibonito, Puerto Rico. Mendez and his family, who attend Iglesia Menonita Betania de Aibonito, had their house destroyed by Hurricane Georges in September 1998.

Those have not been the only challenges for the MDS crew, which includes 11 long-term workers. "It's not like a localized tornado in the States where one community is destroyed and you only set up in that community," Sommers says. "We are spread over such a wide area."

The 70 FEMA referrals to MDS are located throughout the Aibonito area. Finding those referrals in the hills is a major task in itself.

"Many times the locations or directions are inaccurate," Sommers says. "You can drive five miles out of the way up and around and down the cumbersome roads and then realize that you're in the wrong place."

As of mid-January, more than half of the 70 referrals had been contacted by MDS, and various major and minor repair jobs had been completed. But, says Sommers, "The work has just begun."

Coamo, a town south of Aibonito, has 60 percent of the cases. An MDS satellite site is being set up there.

Nevertheless, Sommers says, MDS's work in Puerto Rico is rewarding. "We have been so warmly received by people here and are affirmed that what we do is really important to them," he says. "People are amazed at what we do. The fact that volunteers would actually pay to come here to work for nothing blows their minds. When I tell them that we don't charge for any labor, their faces light up like Christmas trees. That's been the fun part."—*Marisa Doncevic for MCC News Service*

Alabama college is 50th site for martyrs show

Jefferson Davis Community College in Brewton, Ala., hosted "The Mirror of the Martyrs" Jan. 22-31, the 50th site for the 10-year-old traveling exhibit based on the *Martyrs Mirror.*

The exhibit will be shown in the Southeast United States until August, including appearances at Gainesville, Fla.; Sarasota, Fla.; Atlanta; Chapel Hill, N.C.; and Harrisonburg, Va. "The Mirror of the Martyrs" has been seen by an estimated 60,000 people in 18 states and five provinces.

The exhibit features 16 stories of Anabaptist martyrs from the *Martyrs Mirror,* including eight copper plates etched by Dutch printmaker Jan Luyken for the 1685 edition of the book. The exhibit also features sections on the sweep of martyr experiences in the history of the Christian faith.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Why go to London? Because West Virginia unit was presented with unique opportunity to serve

PHILIPPI, W.Va.—It's a long way from Philippi, W.Va., to London, England. And the Service Adventure unit in Philippi is going to make the trip in March, even though it sounds exotic and luxurious.

Each year the unit spends a week on a spring trip as a time for reflection and bonding. One Sunday afternoon last month, unit members were sitting in their living room, brainstorming—and dreaming—about where to go and what to do when someone noted that cheap plane tickets to London were available.

"Why would we go to London?" someone asked.

Through investigation, the unit discovered that a service project would be possible through the London Mennonite Centre, which had drywalling needs, kitchen cabinets to be installed and work in its library that could be done by volunteers. The London Mennonite Centre is a resource and teaching center established in 1952.

But unit members still questioned the reasons for going all the way to London: How is this not a glorified vacation with a little service thrown in? Why now instead of a year from now? What would be the value of going to another country? What are the needs in London vs. the needs in Philippi? Would we be ready to send the group to Central America before a place like London? How will this trip affect the work done in Philippi? What can be brought back from a trip like this that will benefit others? How does one make the leap from living in one of the poorest counties in West Virginia to going to one of the richest cities in the world?

The unit kept exploring and praying and met with its support committee from Philippi Mennonite Church. In the end it was decided that this was opportunity to serve. For some in the unit, this may be their only chance to travel to another country. With the emerging Anabaptist Network of congregations in the United Kingdom and the complexities of Catholic-Protestant conflicts in the region, there are numerous learning possibilities.

The five unit members and two leaders will travel to London March 1-8. The unit is making budget cuts to help pay for the trip, but each member of the group is also responsible for raising $300.

As it is for the unit, the venture is breaking new ground for the London Mennonite Centre. "We do not normally host this many people at once," says Mark Thiessen Nation, program director for the center and a Mennonite Board of Missions worker. "We presently have more maintenance work than we can handle. And we hope that young people will catch a glimpse of the reasons why Mennonites and Anabaptists are valued by other denominations in a country where a small percentage of people attend church."

Service Adventure is a joint program of Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Home Ministries, providing post-high school young adults with short-term service assignments.—*Minnette B. Hostetler for GCMC and MBM news services*

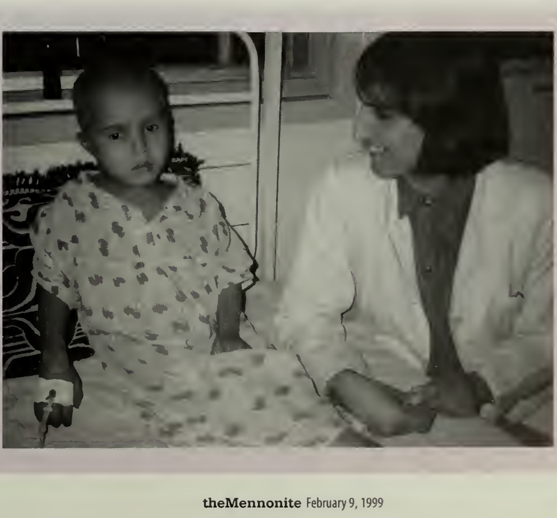
Colombian visitor makes adjustments

Katalina Braun misses the staples of rice and beans in her native Colombian diet. But after spending six months in the United States, she has found something else.

"I love the junk food here," says Braun, a native of Cali, Colombia.

She is one 57 young adults from 27 countries participating in Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange Program. For the past six months, she has worked at Greencroft, a retirement center in Goshen, Ind. After a mid-term conference this month in Saskatoon with the other program participants, Braun will spend six months working at a daycare center in Hesston, Kan. —*John Bender*

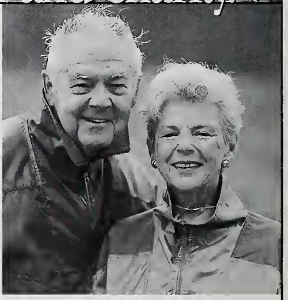
MCC changes plans for Iraq leukemia medicines



MCC photo by Wanda Kraybill

Five-year-old Shahila, a leukemia victim, is joined by her doctor, Selma Haddad, in a Baghdad, Iraq, pediatric hospital. Iraqi children like Shahila are receiving leukemia medicines Mennonite Central Committee has donated to Iraq's Ministry of Health. MCC last year purchased the medicines—enough for a complete two-year treatment for 50 children—with plans to select and follow-up with recipients. But logistical complications have forced MCC to abandon its original plan. In the meantime, more leukemia drugs have become available in Iraq, so MCC's medicines, valued at $100,000, will serve as supplements. The Ministry of Health will distribute the drugs to medical facilities that treat children with leukemia. "We are satisfied that this is the next best option and that many children will benefit," write Greg and Fay Foster, who oversee MCC's work in Iraq.

We give what we can to church and charity.



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Bluffton adds new major, two minors

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College will offer a new major and two new minors starting with the 1999-2000 academic year. The new information systems major, developed by the science and economics and business departments, will feature a broad offering of computer, math and business/management courses.

A minor in women's studies consolidates courses already offered. The second new minor will be teaching English to speakers of other languages.

Ground breaking planned for Kansas arboretum

HESSTON, Kan.—The Dyck Arboretum of the Plains, located on the Hesston College campus, will break ground Feb. 20 for a visitor and education center. The ceremony is scheduled for 4 p.m.

The 3,700-square-foot facility will include an education hall, library, welcome center and exhibit space. The fund-raising goal of $685,000 was met in December 1998 with a $50,000 grant from the Lied Foundation Trust of Las Vegas. Arboretum staff members want to raise another $50,000 for additional furnishings and equipment.

The 13-acre arboretum, established in 1981, features more than 150 types of trees and shrubs and 300 wildflowers native to Kansas. Plans call for the development of 17 more acres.

Matthew Harder Krehbiel

Images of Jesus

Kenichi Calderon-Kawasaki from Tokyo (left) and Kathy Harder Krehbiel from Newton, Kan., both seniors at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., examine the "Images of Jesus" display created by the Basic Issues of Faith and Life class that met during the school's January interterm. This year's class included discussions of the various images of Jesus that have been portrayed throughout the centuries.

New pastors attend seminary sessions

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Thanks to a new grant-funded program, 18 new Mennonite pastors spent four days at Eastern Mennonite Seminary at no cost. They received free registration, meals and lodging during EMS's annual School for Leadership Training Jan. 18-21. Funding came from Lilly Endowment and the seminary admissions office.

The 18 pastors, in their first three years of Mennonite ministry, joined some 240 other pastors, seminary students and lay leaders for the event, which included classes and presentations related to the Bible and scriptural interpretation.

Dissolution of binational MB church proposed

CHICAGO—A task force is recommending that the binational General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches be dissolved into U.S. and Canadian bodies. The task force was authorized in 1997 to conduct a "no-holds-barred" review of the church and its ministries.

While calling for separating the denomination into two national bodies, the task force recommended five areas of partnership, such as missions, theological training and communication.

Delegates are expected to take action at the binational MB convention this summer in Wichita, Kan.—*Mennonite Brethren Herald*

by the way ...

Choice Books has 70 displays on U.S. Air Force bases.
—MBM News Service

Correction: The Mennonite Association of Retired Persons has 3,600 members across the country, not just in six chapters as reported in "Director of Retired People's Organization to Retire" in the Jan. 26 issue.

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Births

Becker, Wade Alan, Jan. 13, to Bruce and Christina (Brown) Becker, Haviland, Kan.

Bewick, Tara Leslie, Jan. 11, to Kelli (Hills) and Shawn Bewick, Drayton, Ont.

Blessing, Tyler Hawk Edward, Jan. 6, to David and Kathy Blessing, Boulder, Colo.

Clintsman, Caleb Allen, Jan. 11, to Cynthia (Roggie) and Rodney Clintsman, Lowville, N. Y.

Cross, Jeremy Wayne, Dec. 27, to Jay and Pam (Rupp) Cross, Middlebury, Ind.

DeHoogh-Kliewer, Hannah Marie, Jan. 7, to David and Michelle DeHoogh-Kliewer, Loveland, Colo.

Epp, Susanna Camille, Jan. 7, to Esther and Stan Epp, Newton, Kan.

Frederick, Shane, Dec. 2, to Evie and Steve Frederick, Hatfield, Pa.

Geiser, Elizabeth Grace, Jan. 5, to Karen (Gerber) and Olin Geiser, Orrville, Ohio.

Gerber, Katelyn Emily, Dec. 29, to Debra and Roger Gerber, Tavistock, Ont.

Gerig, Barbara Joy, Jan. 1, to Lori (Sweet) and Lynn Gerig, Albany, Ore.

Gingrich, Kyle Mason, Jan. 14, to Bruce and Jalisa (Weber) Gingrich, Lititz, Pa.

Hathaway, Benjamin Joel, Dec. 31, to Julie (Osborne) and Myron Hathaway, Millersburg, Ind.

Hershey, Janae Elizabeth and Julia Marie (twins), Dec. 17, to Donna (Kilheffer) and Mervin Hershey, New Holland, Pa.

Hofer, Marissa Mikaela, Jan. 6, to Kristi (Voegeli) and Wayne Hofer, Freeman, S. D.

Holmes, Ethan Jakobe, Jan. 5, to Amy Holmes, Hesston, Kan.

Householter, Peter James, Dec. 8, to James and Karen (Elliot) Householter, Wheaton, Ill.

Kaufman-Frey, Adam, Nov. 22, to Cameron and Dawn Kaufman-Frey, Morgantown, W. Va.

Litwiller, Luke Edward, Jan. 24, to Edward and Rosie (Endress) Litwiller, Hopedale, Ill.

McCune-Wall, Brant Abram, Jan. 7, to Dawn and Loren McCune-Wall, Manhattan, Kan.

Miller, Kelsey Renee, Jan. 17, to Jeffrey and Kathy (Coulter) Miller, Middlebury, Ind.

Miller, Kienan Ray, Jan. 15, to Gordon and Tonya (Holsopple) Miller, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Nase, Katherine Elizabeth, Dec. 26, to Lisa (Derstine) and Robert Nase, Harleysville, Pa.

Priest, Aaron Logan, Jan. 4, to Alvin and Melissa Priest, Hesston, Kan.

Schlabach, Alyssa, June 4, 1995, received for adoption Dec. 14, 1998, by Edith and Ken Schlabach, Millersburg, Ohio.

Siebels, William Henry, Jan. 4, to Richard and Theresa (Ziegler) Siebels, Newport News, Va.

Snow, Niqole Rae, Jan. 10, to Angela (Holmes) and Casey Snow, Hesston, Kan.

Stahl, Andrew David, Dec. 3, to Darsi St. Louis and John David Stahl, Bainbridge Island, Wash.

Walker, Emily Claire Zehr, Jan. 6, to Cheryl Zehr Walker and Steve Walker, Bluffton, Ohio.

Weaver, Cora Michelle, Jan. 16, to Anna (Risto) and Scott Weaver, Waterloo, Ont.

Yoder, Jamison Alec, Dec. 21, to Damon and Janet (Lehman) Yoder, West Chicago, Ill.

Marriages

Boschmann/Harmon: Michael Boschmann, North Newton, Kan., and Alice Harmon, Salina, Kan., Jan. 2 at First Baptist Church, Salina.

Buckwalter/Rutt: Richard Buckwalter, Brooklyn, N. Y., and Ann Rutt, Richmond, Va., Nov. 7 at Ginter Park United Methodist Church, Richmond.

Gibbons/Reynolds: Thomas Gibbons, Cleveland, and Sheila Reynolds, Bluffton, Ohio, Dec. 26 at Cleveland.

Heath/Yousey: Daniel Heath, Erie, Pa., and Patricia Yousey, Akron, Ohio, Dec. 28 at Summit Mennonite Church, Barberton, Ohio.

Jacoby/Szabo: Kathryn Jacoby, Bluffton, Ohio, and Jon Szabo, Bluffton, Jan. 16 at St. James Chapel at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York.

Conference of Mennonites in Canada

GENERAL SECRETARY

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada seeks a full-time General Secretary to begin serving in the proposed new Mennonite Church Canada in August 1999.

As the chief executive officer, the General Secretary will be responsible for implementing the mission and vision of the transformed church in Canada, as well as supervising the staff and coordinating the total program.

Appointed by and reporting to the General Board, the General Secretary relates closely to the various program boards and committees of the Church. In addition, she/he carries primary responsibility for building and maintaining relationships with Canadian area conferences and congregations.

The assignment also includes fostering partnership with the emerging new Mennonite Church US, as well as relating to other church bodies. Important qualifications include a strong personal faith, seminary and/or other graduate theological education, pastoral or church leadership experience, and proven ability to implement major organizational change.

Applicants must have a demonstrated Christian commitment from an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective, and a passion for the ministry and mission of the church.

Strong leadership and communication skills, organizational and administrative strength, personal flexibility, and willingness to travel are essential. The ability to relate to a wide spectrum of persons and a broad theological diversity are also requirements.

This position will reside in Winnipeg and be part of the new Mennonite Church Canada, if delegates at St. Louis 99 approve that proposal.

Please submit a letter of application with resume and three references by February 28, 1999, to:

Ron Sawatsky
Chair of Search Committee
134 Woodbend Cres.
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Deaths

Amstutz, Loa, 100, Bluffton, Ohio, died Nov. 12. Spouse: John Amstutz (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Jane Greiser Bender (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 16 at Bluffton.

Blosser, Richard, 83, North Newton, Kan., died Dec. 24 of a stroke. Spouse: Mary Ann Pankratz Blosser. Parents: Christian and Carrie Yoder Blosser (deceased). Other survivors: children Donald, Debbie Penner, Carol Temple; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at North Newton.

Breckbill, Mary, 78, Willow Street, Pa., died Jan. 21. Spouse: Parke Breckbill. Parents: John and Annie Shaubach Meck (deceased). Other survivors: children Mervin, John ,Miriam Peters, Anna, Wilmer; 12 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 24 at New Providence (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Diener, Wilma, 80, Canton, Kan., died Dec. 26 of a stroke. Parents: Arthur and Katie Diener (deceased). Other survivor: brother Christian. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Canton.

Eschliman, Nora, 100, Orrville, Ohio, died Jan. 11. Parents: John and Amelia Eschliman (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 16 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Graber, Marie, 79, Leo, Ind., died Jan. 9. Parents: Ben and Anna Graber (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 12 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo.

Graber, Verne, 82, North Newton, Kan., died Dec. 2. Spouse: Delia Goering Graber. Parents: John and Anna Goering Graber (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Paula Morris; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Harder, Waldo, 81, Whitewater, Kan., died Jan. 5. Parents: Henry and Margarethe Entz Harder (deceased). Survivors: children Steven, David, Mark, Barbara Thomsen, Janice Schoen; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Hofer, Walter, 80, Freeman, S.D., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Luella Hofer. Other survivors: children Maureen Friesen, Jonetta Barta; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Leis, Oscar, 77, Tavistock, Ont., died Dec. 28.

McProud, Elma Regier, 90, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Donald McProud. Parents: Bernhard and Auguste Epp Regier (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 21 at Newton.

Metzler, A. Jay, 58, Belleville, Pa., died Dec. 26. Spouse: Ruth Ann Yoder Metzler. Parents: Ross (deceased) and Margaret Blough Metzler. Other survivors: children Barbara, Alan, Arlin; four grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 29 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Mishler, Mary Ruth, 80, Shipshewana, Ind., died Jan. 18 of complications from a stroke. Parents: James and Verba Mishler (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 20 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Oyer, Elmer "Dutch," 84, Fisher, Ill., died Jan. 10. Spouse: Ida Jane Yoder Oyer (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Bertha Zimmerman Oyer (deceased). Survivors: children Darrell, Gary, Norman; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 23 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher.

Short, Harold, 80, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 18. Spouse: Katherine Stamm Short. Parents: Simon and Emma Kutzli Short (deceased). Other survivors: children Gerald, William, Delvin, Jerry, David, Donald, Harold Jr., Betty Tingley; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Stampfler, Emma, 94, McMillan, Mich., died Dec. 14. Spouse: Raymond Stampfler (deceased). Survivors: children Patricia Olson, Ann Littlejohn, Jerome; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at Newberry, Mich.

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Unruh, Olin, 75, Great Bend, Kan., died Jan. 11 of a heart attack. Spouse: Wynona Kehn Unruh. Parents: Walter and Lena Unruh (deceased). Other survivors: children Steven, Lois Ratliff, Bonita Puck, Dale; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 14 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.

Wedel, Richard, 86, Moundridge, Kan., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Marie Miller Wedel. Parents: Peter and Emma Kaufman Wedel (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Kay McNab, Keith. Funeral: Jan. 6 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Zimmerly, Edna Blough, 94, Sterling, Ohio, died Dec. 21. Spouse: Dennis Zimmerly (deceased). Parents: Christian and Amanda Blough (deceased). Survivors: children Ann Detweiler, Dennis, Evelyn, Jacob, Twila, Velma; seven grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 24 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

classifieds

Classified advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. To place a classified ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Experienced bricklayers** and mason tenders needed in the central Texas area. Call Quality Brickworks, Inc., 254-722-6060.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks a ***1/3-time music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Feb. 25, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church**, Sarasota, Fla., seeks resumes of people interested in serving as ***minister of youth and young adults***. Candidates should submit their resume or letter of interest to A. Jerome Yoder, chair, Search Committee, Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, 4041 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34232.

- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a ***five-week teaching program*** in China this summer. One week of orientation and sight-seeing in Beijing is included. Teaching experience not required.

  For more information, contact CEE, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; fax 540-434-5556; email ChinaEdEx@aol.com.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Indianapolis seeks a ***half-time associate pastor*** with broad pastoral duties and a focus on young adults and youth. Position available May 1. Women and minorities especially encouraged to apply. Please contact Search Committee, First Mennonite Church, 4601 Knolton Road, Indianapolis, IN 46228; 317-251-1980.

- **The International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an immediate opening for a ***one-year voluntary service*** assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility, with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian, homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

  Contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email IGH-DC@juno.com.

- **First Mennonite Church** is a mature, General Conference congregation of 225 members situated near downtown Saskatoon. We are in need of a full-time experienced ***associate pastor*** with an Anabaptist foundation. This person will have strong gifts in teaching, leadership and outreach; will be Spirit-filled, highly motivated with good interpersonal skills; will have the ability to reach out to the broader community, especially younger generations.

  Please send resumes to Search Committee, c/o Albert Warkentin, 112-2305 Adelaide St. East, Saskatoon, SK S7J 5H6.

- **Goshen College** seeks an ***admission coordinator*** for the B.S.N. completion program, a half-time administrative faculty position. Responsibilities include recruitment of students, administration of the program and policy development. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred, in nursing, business management, marketing or a related field, and at least two years experience with health care or marketing and recruitment. Interviews begin March 1, job responsibilities begin April 1, 1999.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Goshen College strongly encourages applications from members of under-represented groups and men.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks ***wellness center director*** to open new wellness center in spring of 2000, and expand existing wellness program for VMRC residents, staff and community seniors. Candidate must have minimum of bachelor's degree, appropriate certifications and experience directing a wellness-fitness program for older adults and employees. Successful candidate will have strong marketing and research skills, ability to direct center operations, build networks and facilitate teamwork.

  Qualified candidates submit one-page letter describing wellness philosophy, resume and salary history to Director of Human Resources, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; fax 540-564-3700; email hr@vmrc.org; website www.vmrc.org.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for a full-time position in the ***physical education department.*** Responsibilities include giving leadership to the academic program as department chair, to the athletic program as athletic director and teaching physical education courses, e.g., research seminar, physical education for children, or supervision of student teachers. Candidates must demonstrate extensive training and experience in teaching, coaching and administration. Physical education teaching experience at the K-12 level strengthens candidacy. An understanding of and commitment to Goshen College's vision for a strong athletic program as part of the overall academic mission of the college is essential. A doctorate or master's degree in physical education or related field is required. Interviewing will begin Feb. 16 and continue until the position is filled.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; e-mail dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Goshen College strongly encourages applications from members of under-represented groups and women.

- **Salford Mennonite Church** seeks candidates for ***youth pastor***. Salford Mennonite Church is located in Harleysville, Pa., about 30 miles north of Philadelphia. Candidates should hold strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. The youth pastor position is currently half-time, but Salford welcomes candidates seeking full-time or part-time ministry opportunities.

  Interested people may respond in writing to Youth Pastor Search Committee, Salford Mennonite Church, 480 Groff's Mill Road, Harleysville, PA 19438; 215-256-0778; email mail@salfordmc.org.

Mennonite Central Committee
invites applications for the position of:

Director of International Programs

Starting date: August 1999
Location: Akron, Pennsylvania
Applications accepted through April 2, 1999

Direct inquiries and applications to:
Dwight McFadden, Director of Human Resources,
MCC, 21 South 12th St., PO Box 500,
Akron PA 17501-0500

Qualifications: An understanding of MCC as a service agency founded by North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. Experience in international programs with strong cross-cultural skills. Administrative and overseas experience, with strong conceptual and analytical skills for program design, planning and evaluation. College/University Degree required, master's degree preferred.

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(204) 261-6381

Is it too late to reconsider the two-country structure?

by Peter Dyck

That they may all be one … so that the world may believe that you have sent me.—John 17:21

We must reconsider the current move of separate U.S. and Canadian structures. Organization and structure have their place, but they must never get in the way of basics—which include loving each other and being a witness to the world.

The reason for the merger of the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) is not greater efficiency but to be a more authentic witness. People outside the church who see our fractured condition probably see little difference between us and the ethnic splintering seen in Rwanda and Bosnia. Only the method of our squabble is different.

During Advent we told our children about the wolf and lamb lying down together in peace, that that's how we Christians should live together. We ought to be more honest and also tell them about our seeming obsession with separating ourselves from each other. Our Mennonite history is full of divisions.

I am a Canadian citizen living in the United States. I was baptized and ordained in a GC congregation and now am a member and attend an MC congregation. All this didn't just happen; Elfrieda, my wife, and I have long held deep convictions about the need for integration. But not with a complicated two-country structure that makes the 49th parallel more important than John 17. We need more imagination, more trust and more love.

Imagination: Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." There were two moments in the gradual development of the merger idea when imagination broke through like light in the darkness. In those illumined and blessed moments we had a glimpse of the new denomination. One was at Bethlehem '83, when GC president Jake Tilitzky and MC moderator Ross Bender moved slowly from opposite sides of the stage toward each other, dialoguing as they went, until they met in the middle, shook hands and embraced. The applause was unprecedented.

The other was at Wichita '95, when the two groups met after separate meetings in which each had voted overwhelmingly to unite. When this was announced at the joint meeting, eyes became moist as we sang, "Here in this place, new light is streaming, now is the darkness vanished away."

Trust: In those two moments we were one. Then the "realists" took over. In effect they said imagination is OK, but we must also pay attention to knowledge. Of course, there are administrative and structural differences that need to be taken care of, but let's not let these differences blur the vision or sabotage the dream. Nuts and bolts have become prominent on the agenda. We are prepared to spend more than $500,000 on what in the end is going to be a contract marriage. Every detail will be taken care of except one—lack of trust.

Of course, there are administrative and structural differences that need to be taken care of, but let's not let these differences blur the vision or sabotage the dream.

Love: Finally, to make this merger work we need not only imagination and more trust but a heap of love. It is still true that faith and hope are wonderful ingredients in this difficult and complex venture, but the greatest is love. If we do not offer the world love, tolerance and acceptance, what do we have that others don't offer? We have many "spiritual" people in our churches concerned about dotting every "i" and crossing every "t" but who cannot love. They know all about 1 Corinthians 13, but they cannot love. Before his Damascus road experience, Paul boasted about his spirituality: "circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews … as to righteousness under the law, blameless" (Philippians 3:5-6), but he would have nothing to do with the Christians. They were different. No one will deny that Paul was a spiritual man, but he couldn't love or even accept those who differed with him.

Was it not love that attracted the non-Christians to the early church so that they flocked to join it? There is imagination, trust and love, but the greatest of these is love. If we take 1 Corinthians 13 and John 17 seriously we simply must take another look at the "one-denomination, two-country structure."

Peter Dyck is a member of Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale, Pa., was a long-time administrator for Mennonite Central Committee and is a well-known storyteller.

Faith resources

Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War, edited by Glen Stassen (The Pilgrim Press, 1998, $29.95 hardcover, $16.95 paper), includes essays by 23 scholars, including Mennonites Duane K. Friesen and Ted Koontz.

Re-forming the Center: American Protestantism, 1900 to the Present, edited by Douglas Jacobsen and William Vance Trollinger Jr. (Eerdmans, 1998, $28), explores the structure and identity of American Protestantism in the 20th century.

Is God a Vegetarian? Christianity, Vegetarianism and Animal Rights by Richard Alan Young (Open Court, 1998, $19.95) examines key biblical texts pertaining to dietary customs, vegetarianism and animal rights.

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Rich Preheim

Past and present demonstrate hope for future leadership

Robert Kreider's record of contributions to the church is as distinguished as any you'll find in the last half of the 20th century. His academic career spanned more than three decades as professor and administrator at Bluffton (Ohio) College and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. A longtime Mennonite Central Committee board member, he was instrumental in starting MCC's Teachers Abroad Program and China Educational Exchange. A historian, he is one of the organizers of the "Mirror of the Martyrs" traveling exhibit, telling the story of those who have died for their faith. His writings have covered faith, reconciliation, scholarship and more.

But before making his mark on contemporary Mennonitism, Kreider was a young man, short in experience and qualifications.

We all have been or will be like him in that regard: teenagers to 30-somethings facing the challenges of faith and life in our times, trying to carry on the work inherited from our elders despite our real or perceived shortcomings. Failure can loom large, and success is not always evident. But know that youth can—and do—meet the demands before them, offering hope amid fears that the passing of generations could leave the church devoid of leadership and vision.

They may not have cut their leadership teeth in alternative service, as previous generations did, but that doesn't mean they are less able to assume responsibility.

Kreider was pursuing post-graduate studies at the University of Chicago when, in the early 1940s, the call came from the church in the form of Civilian Public Service (CPS). Even though he had been preparing for a career in history, Kreider while in his 20s became an administrator of MCC's mental health program and then went on to provide significant leadership in post-war relief operations in Germany.

And the rest, as they say, is history, as Mennonites entered a new era of witnessing to the world. Like a myriad of stories throughout the ages, the accounts of Kreider and numerous others of the CPS generation demonstrate that young people can guide the work of the church, sometimes in glorious fashion. Furthermore, young people can mature in their leadership abilities as the years go.

While the past demonstrates encouragement for the future, so does the present. A friend recently queried me (and dozens of others) about potential candidates to interview for a project on young adults in the church. Within minutes, I came up with more than 30 names of people in their 20s and 30s who have or will provide leadership in advancing the kingdom in local, national and international arenas.

There were pastors of thriving, vibrant congregations and administrators of denominational programs pushing the church to greater faithfulness. There were people already with years of mission and service experience, both here and abroad. There were seminarians and graduate school students preparing to further contribute their energies and abilities.

My list included musicians and teachers, insurance agents and journalists, chemists and social workers, farmers and doctors, African-Americans and Hispanics, rural folks and urban denizens. One person is using his artistic skills to communicate the good news in inner-city contexts. Another person has served as a consultant for peace and justice agencies working in the Middle East.

These are people who have taught Sunday school, advised youth groups, been congregational council members, chaired local meat-canning committees, held positions on the area conference level, served on churchwide boards.

This age group may be called Generation X or Baby Busters, names with connotations of cynicism and suspicion of the present and the future. But while these 20- and 30-somethings have their own cultural and historical distinctives, they are talented, creative followers of the Eternal God, committed to kingdom work on earth.

Robert Kreider is now living in North Newton, Kan., leading an active retirement. The church is a whole lot different now than when he and his peers inherited it from their elders. And the church will no doubt be a whole lot different when the younger generation is done. They may not have cut their leadership teeth in alternative service, as previous generations did, but they are certainly capable to assume responsibility.—*rp*

the Mennonite

February 16, 1999

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25 years of service

huck Neufeld looks back on his years with Mennonite Voluntary Service

7 A daily washing in the Word
8 Socially responsible investing expanding
9 First Brazilian Mennonite missionaries
16 Only by prayer and fasting

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Homosexuality and the church (continued)

The two articles by John Roth ("Why the Mennonite Church Does Not Regard Same-Sex Marriages as a Christian Option," Jan. 18 and 26) were very helpful in better understanding what is clearly the majority position of the church and better evaluating the various arguments on both sides of the issue today. The arguments support the position that God's basic intent is for heterosexual unions in which children are conceived, born and nurtured.

In general I also agree that the arguments based on more subjective personal experience and current cultural developments are secondary to our biblical understanding and the history/tradition of the Christian community. But we also know that—rightly or wrongly—the tradition of the Christian community is subject to change, as for example regarding the acceptance into our congregations of divorced and remarried individuals. In such changes the role of personal experience is clearly important, as was Peter's experience that the Spirit had also descended on Gentile/uncircumcised believers.

This also means that we must take seriously and treat with respect arguments such as those by Weldon Nisly ("Homosexuality and the Healing of the Church," Jan. 19) and Martin Lehman ("Toward Common Ground," Jan. 26). —*Elmer Neufeld, Bluffton, Ohio*

Roth's articles were well written. But I give more credence than he does to personal experience. Roth assumes that his preferred two sources of authority, Scripture and Christian tradition, are made of something other than collective personal experiences.

But Scripture was not jettisoned from the heavens on golden plates. It was written by authors who had varied interpretations of the personal experiences of God in their community. It is a collection of reported personal and community experiences. Christian tradition is also a collection of past personal and group experiences. Tradition uses personal experiences to decide what contributes to community and what threatens community. And this perception changes with time. We should never forget that the Anabaptist movement got its start by negating the prevalent Christian tradition of the time.

Personal experience includes God's Spirit at work within the Christian community. God's Spirit informed the believing community before there was any written Scripture. And, like Peter in Acts 10:1f, we need to be open to God's Spirit informing our decision making today. Personal experience is telling us that it is not helpful to judge one another in a way that excludes anyone from our fellowship.—*Calvin R. King, Lenexa, Kan.*

While I am grateful for the mediating moments in Roth's articles, I was disappointed to see that he employed the manipulative "thought experiment" of comparing homosexual covenants to incest. This is a slippery-slope argument that ignores significant distinctions. Also, to suggest that Christians don't bless incestuous unions primarily because of the Bible and the collective wisdom of the church doesn't explain why incest is the only almost universal sexual taboo, even in cultures deprived of Scripture and the Christian tradition.

I was chagrined, too, that in articulating various ethical authorities, Roth misleadingly morphed the last of those sources for ethical reflection into "sexual rights," a straw argument he could handily dismiss. Absent was any regard for reason, the remaining authority in the usual quartet of ethical sources (Scripture, Christian tradition, human experience and reason). Reason, which usually includes insights from natural law, human logic and the natural and social sciences, could have both strengthened and weakened Roth's argument, adding integrity and clarity.

The tension and confusion about what the future holds on this issue will likely remain with us for some time. As one deeply committed to the church, I'm still praying for more charity and compassion for our gay and lesbian sisters and brothers than we've witnessed so far.—*Keith Graber Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

Thank you for printing the article by Lehman and the Speaking Out by Paul M. Lederach in the Jan. 26 issue. They felt like that first delicious warm spring breeze after the cold of winter. I found myself crying. I think the tears that came first were tears for all the hurt and rejection that gay and lesbian people I've known have experienced over the years. But these were also tears of joy. Somebody within the leadership of the church understands and is saying it out loud. The invitation of Revelation 22:17 is indeed for everyone. There are no extenuating circumstances. Come! —*Betsy Headrick McCrae, Akron, Pa.*

The Jan. 19 editorial ("Working Out Our Salvation with Fear and Trembling") was right on

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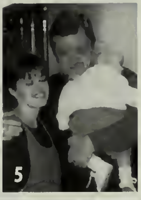
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y readers say

when it pointed out that the homosexuality issue is "about behavior, not orientation." It has concerned me that there has been a tendency to make comparisons of different sins rather than hearing what the Scripture says. If we are allowing orientation to be the basis for our behavior, there is not much that we cannot justify.

I also appreciated John Roth's needed message. I know that those in positions of leadership have a lot of responsibility and get a lot of pressure from both sides. I pray for our leaders and ask that God would give wisdom for the tasks they have.—*David Yoder, Milford, Del.*

Roth seems to have his heart in the right place, but his case was so diffident that I almost felt he had touched the mute button. On his own example, if the church might conceivably "change its position on the question of blessing homosexual marriages," might not the church change its position on incest?

Wth regard to other articles, Acts 15 has gotten far too much attention, most of it wrong-headed and severed from its context in Acts 10–11. Acts 15 is not about disagreements over the interpretation or application of the Bible—everybody in the first century agreed that God's law to Moses clearly prohibited certain foods as unclean and, thus by implication, prohibited association with the Gentiles who ate those foods. Nor is Acts about the importance of religious experience, ecstasy or being open to God's guidance. Acts 15 is the account of what God did in an act in history, declaring clean what he had earlier declared unclean (note the past tense, "has made clean," in Acts 10:15 and 11:9) and telling this by revelation to the apostle Christ had designated as holding the keys of the kingdom. Advocates of homosexual activity can get no help from Acts 15.—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Cover photo
by Katie Marshall

A search for home

Chuck Neufeld looks back on 25 years with Mennonite Voluntary Service.

by Melanie Zuercher

Chuck Neufeld says that one way to describe his life is "a search for home." And for almost 25 years, one place he found "home" was Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS).

In April 1974, when Chuck and Bonnie Neufeld became unit leaders for the Markham, Ill., unit, it was part of the MVS program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). Today, MVS is joint with the former Voluntary Service program of Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church. On Dec. 31, 1998, Chuck ended his formal association with MVS.

A native of Manitoba, Chuck has found south central Kansas—where MVS has been, and as a joint program still is, based—a touchstone throughout his life. He was born in Winnipeg, and by age 5 had moved with his family to Yarrow, B.C., where his father, Abe Neufeld, taught Bible school; Kiev, S.D., where Abe pastored a Russian Baptist church while waiting for an assignment with the Mennonite Brethren mission board; and Hillsboro, Kan.

"I made my first childish, childlike, confession of faith in Jesus in Hillsboro," Chuck says. His father was finishing a bachelor's degree at Tabor College. One semester shy of graduation and right before Christmas 1954, the mission board sent Abe and Irene Neufeld and their family of three boys to Neuwied, West Germany. They eventually did mission work in Austria and Switzerland as well.

"By the time I graduated from high school, I had averaged a different school every year," says Chuck, "sometimes two in one year, one time three, and had gone to school in five countries.

"I never met Bonnie until that tetherball moment," Chuck says. "I had driven my dad to Camp Arnes [a Mennonite Brethren camp north of Winnipeg] to be the speaker at family camp. I was going to drop him off and use the car. Then I saw Bonnie playing tetherball. She looked a lot better than she played. I thought she could use some help. I never left—I ended up staying for family camp."

"I knew by the middle of the week that this was who I was going to marry," says Bonnie.

Bonnie had already graduated from high school. She entered nurse's training at Winnipeg General Hospital that fall of 1966. Chuck had another year of high school, which he began in Winnipeg but had to finish in Reedley, Calif. He studied two years at Mennonite Brethren Bible College (now Concord College) in Winnipeg, and the couple married in 1969. Two weeks later, they moved to Hillsboro for Chuck to attend Tabor.

"I was almost immediately at odds with the administration over the Vietnam War," says Chuck. "I also protested 'compulsory religion' and led a sit-in one time to protest required chapel. The president used to call me into his office regularly to tell me how much money I'd cost the college that day over my stance against the war."

Close to death: Chuck came close to death as a result of his anti-war activities. "One evening I had gone to pick up Bonnie, who worked [as a nurse] until 11. I was out in the parking lot, sitting on the hood of our Jeep, and a car drove up. A voice called out, 'Are you Chuck Neufeld?' I said I was, and the next thing I knew the nose of a double-barreled shotgun was pointed out the window at me.

"Then I saw Bonnie coming out of the hospital. I yelled at her, 'Stay back! They've got a gun!' She kept coming. She tossed her purse into the Jeep and walked right up to the other car. With the barrel of the gun in her belly, she said to the guys in the car, 'I just baked a cherry pie this afternoon—why don't we go home and talk this over?'

"It was kind of like the rich young ruler—I think they didn't know what to do, so they just went away sadly."

Chuck says the incident marked the beginning of his estrangement from the church. "I felt like my opposition to the war was in keeping with how the Bible had been taught at home and in the church. I acted on what I'd been taught, and I was surprised by how much trouble I got into. How could I be at odds with the people who'd sent our family into mission?

"I don't claim to always act as Jesus would have," he says, "but I have always tried, in my clumsy way, to act out of that center. I still wonder about it today: How do we as a church call people to that gospel of Jesus and then when they take it seriously tell them to cool it?

"I don't recall ever contemplating turning my back on religion, but I no longer knew where to find community."

Chuck finished his degree in history, Bible and music at Tabor and eventually went to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., where he completed a one-year

> [Bonnie] tossed her purse into the Jeep and walked right up to the other car. With the barrel of the gun in her belly, she said to the guys in the car, "I just baked a cherry pie this afternoon—why don't we go home and talk this over?"
>
> —*Chuck Neufeld*

Chuck and Bonnie Neufeld with daughter Kristin and granddaughter Naomi in December 1998.

theology program. The Neufelds returned to Winnipeg, and he got his teaching certification in 1973. "I intended to be a high school teacher for the rest of my life," he says.

Juvenile offenders: Instead, the couple moved to Hamilton, Ont., to be houseparents in a group home for teenage boys who couldn't be in the public schools. All were juvenile offenders; some were trying to get off drugs; some came from abusive homes.

Chuck and Bonnie's first child, Kristin, was born into this setting in October 1973. "Even the toughest boys, who couldn't verbalize their feelings without fighting, would come upstairs and say, 'Can I look at her?' " Bonnie says. "And they'd spend a long time, maybe a half hour, just watching her. They'd push her in her stroller. We trusted them with her.

"I wondered about it. … We were coming into a situation of enormous need, coming with privilege, a 'safety net.' Were we giving a glimpse of a different kind of life without the tools to get there?"

"How often does the church offer the call without the tools?" Chuck says.

Although they had been promised a weekend off every month in the Hamilton position, after 13 months, they'd had only one weekend free and were burned out.

About the time they resigned, Gene Stoltzfus, MVS director at the time, came to see them. Even though they were not in MVS, he usually visited them when he was in Hamilton to see the MVS unit there.

Gene asked if they were interested in going to Markham, Ill., to be part of the MVS unit there. The next day they met with Ed Springer, pastor at Community Mennonite Church in Markham at the time.

They found the church and community "very welcoming—we had little struggle deciding to go there," Chuck says. They began a two-year term as unit leaders in April 1974. At that time the Markham unit (which closed in 1994) had four houses—five with the Neufeld family—and 24 volunteers. Chuck and Bonnie's second child, Jon, was born in Markham in 1976.

They assumed they would stay in Markham for only two years but decided at the end of their first term to renew. Early in the second term, Chuck was asked to join the MVS staff as associate director-east. "They wanted us to move to Newton," he says, "but we couldn't imagine leaving the [Markham] church and community"—or moving back to Kansas.

Ten years on the road: Chuck took the position on a "dispersed staff" arrangement. "I was in charge of units in Canada and everything east of Newton," he says. "The highest number of units I ever had was 19. I was on the road 180 to 200 days a year." That adds up to about 10 years away from home and nearly a million miles driven, he figures.

The family learned to adjust. "I don't know many couples who have enjoyed as many reunions and the anticipation of being together as we have," says Chuck. "Even though I missed Bonnie and the kids, we learned to develop our own routines and projects."

"I'm grateful to MVS all those years for flexibility," says Bonnie, who has not served officially since 1976. "Jon developed epilepsy at about age 2, and Chuck was always at liberty to come home, to cancel or rearrange trips, with the flexibility and the blessing of the other staff. It didn't have to be a life or death situation. I always felt like we as a family were

I don't know many couples who have enjoyed as many reunions and the anticipation of being together as we have.

—Chuck Neufeld

Living on $25 a month

Chuck Neufeld has served the longest tenure of anyone in the organization's 51-year-history. He has seen many changes since he began his first MVS term in 1974.

"Back then, young people were more willing to accept longer assignments—two years, or even three," he says. "Something's been happening in our society, not just with service work. We want sound bites, the full experience in the shortest time. …

"Even though we want volunteers to have a good experience, that's not the primary purpose of MVS. It is, 'If you give your life, you'll save it. If you lose your life, you'll find it.' That's what Jesus offers."

Chuck says MVS is feeling increasing pressure to "guarantee all kinds of benefits, such as student loan repayment and health benefits, that make us 'competitive' with other organizations. There used to be a scrappier spirit: 'Hey, we're in MVS, and we're going to live on $25 a month.' "

He says there are many churches and communities that want MVS units. The problem is finding volunteers.

Although Chuck mourns the rise of "corporate culture" mentality in church institutions, he also appreciates his experiences with the General Conference Mennonite Church. "Sometimes institutions can seem like 'the required structure.' For us it was also a caring community that dealt respectfully and compassionately with our family."

He notes one example of the freedom and trust he felt as part of MVS: In all the musical recordings he made that had MVS on the label, "nobody ever once in all those years censored or even scrutinized the lyrics."

A highlight of his nearly 25 years with MVS has been "the ministry MVS has been involved in, in challenging the political and social structures in this country—such as through the sanctuary movement. I'm grateful for what's been a consistently Christ-centered peace witness."*—Melanie Zuercher*

included in the MVS life.

In fact, Chuck says, "Kristin was stunned—disoriented—by my resignation [from MVS]. She's only ever known [me] as 'an MVSer.' Once she said, 'When I grow up, I'm not going to mow grass and paint, like my mom. I'm going to type like my dad.' "

One reason Chuck and Bonnie were reluctant to leave Markham was because of their involvement in Community Mennonite Church. Chuck served as minister of worship for nine years, and Bonnie was minister of pastoral care for a time.

"In 1982, the congregation declared itself a sanctuary for Central American refugees," Chuck says. "Our home was a welcoming station for the Overground Railroad. We had many rich experiences during that time. We had a young woman who gave birth and then lived with us for several months. She slept in our bed while we slept on the living room floor. We still hear from her occasionally."

That's been my attempt—to live and work with a very open book, to be ready to celebrate the realities, however difficult they might be. There's tremendous safety in that. Secrecy in programs leads to ill behavior somewhere down the road.

—Chuck Neufeld

Kansas calls: However, in 1987, Kansas called again, and this time, the Neufelds decided to go. Chuck became MVS director.

"The spotlight was on MVS because of circumstances surrounding the former director's resignation," Chuck says. "I remember someone on the CHM board asking me what I was going to do about the 'big black cloud,' the negative press. And I said, 'I don't intend to stay under it. I'm going to run for every ray of light that's available.'

"And I have. That's been my attempt—to live and work with a very open book, to be ready to celebrate the realities, however difficult they might be. There's tremendous safety in that. Secrecy in programs leads to ill behavior somewhere down the road.

"At the end of my time with MVS, with millions of words written, thousands of letters and memos, hundreds of fights, I'm leaving with a clean slate, or at least a forgiven one. I'm not at odds with anyone."

Chuck was ordained in Kansas in 1991. In 1994, Bonnie came near death after an electrical accident that left her unable to walk for a time. Recovery and rehabilitation were long and painful.

Two years later, in 1996, the couple moved back to Markham to become associate pastors at Community Mennonite Church, although Chuck remained part-time on the MVS staff as associate director.

"This is not meant to make light [of Bonnie's accident] in any way," says Chuck, "but the reality is we are all bumped, bruised and even severely injured. The question is, What would we be without that injury? We don't know. It's one of those mysteries we are challenged to live with.

"Without the accident, Bonnie might have continued to work at the clinic [in Newton] and I wouldn't have been knocked off dead center. After it happened, we made some significant life changes."

Bonnie agrees that the accident was a pivotal event. "It enabled me to think about different options for ministry," she says.

Struggle for balance: Last August, Chuck announced his resignation from MVS. One reason among many was the ongoing struggle to balance MVS responsibilities with "the other occupations in my life, pastoring and music-making." Chuck has been writing songs since he was 15 and has a string of 10 recordings stretching back more than 30 years.

He describes the church he pastors in Markham as "a congregation that has declared itself a community devoted to [racial] integration and committed to reflecting God's kingdom as including many peoples." Membership is about two-thirds African-American and the rest Anglo and international.

"In the '60s, when white homeowners were leaving for the suburbs and blacks were moving in, the congregation had to decide whether to hand over the church and run, or stay. They chose to stay."

Leaving MVS after almost a quarter of a century, Chuck says it has played an integral part in his search for home. "For years, I was angry for what had happened in Kansas [during the Vietnam War]."

Bonnie adds, "We were adamant for a long time that we wouldn't move back to Kansas."

"God's grace is sneaky—the stage was being set for a larger reconciliation [when we finally made the move in 1987]," Chuck says. Daughter Kristin "fell in love with a son of Kansas." She and Jerry Epp met at Newton High School, married after college and have a baby daughter, Naomi. "Now my descendants are Kansans," Chuck says proudly.

"MVS has been a place of growth and safety, despite the injuries, including broken relationships and painful discoveries," he says. "Still, the grace of God was received. I found a community that welcomed me when I wasn't sure I wanted to be welcomed."

At a farewell chapel at the GC headquarters in Newton, Chuck told GC staff: "It's a comfort and a caution. Our words and our actions occupy much more than the moment in which they're spoken or performed. They have their own life. The caution is to offer the good stuff decently, in a Christly way. My prayer is that the good stuff will have value and be recalled and the bad will be forgiven, with God's grace."

Melanie Zuercher is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

A daily washing in the Word

by Harold N. Miller

People of God through the centuries have witnessed the voice of God speaking to them in the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). One morning that voice brought remarkable healing and wholeness to my mind and emotions.

I have not done well at "daily Bible reading" most of my life. But two years ago I told God I would spend at least 10 minutes with the Bible each morning—for 30 days. Since then I have read and mulled on a passage in the Bible almost every morning.

I don't study the passage and try to figure out everything it says. I do that when I'm preparing sermons and lessons. I read maybe a five-minute section, anticipating that I'll receive something that will delight, something that applies to my life. Then I interact with God (the author) in prayer.

Morning after morning, as I meditate on this book that has been the best-seller through the ages, some of its spirit (Spirit) washes over me, enabling me to experience a bit more of God's love, joy and peace in my life. Most mornings any help I receive from my Bible reading is almost imperceptible. But one morning it was dramatic.

I had been chosen to represent a group of churches at a national meeting in Denver. As the week of the meeting drew closer, my anxiety level rose. About 100 people were to be at the meeting, many of whom I knew and admired and wanted to impress.

I'm by nature shy, fearful. I have struggled with a speaking phobia since junior high. If the thought comes that I may not be able to say a particular word in a sentence that is forming in my mind, I may be physically incapable of articulating its sounds. One of my main concerns as I prepared to go to Denver was how to avoid getting choked up by my fear.

In my devotional time the week before the meeting I came upon Paul's account of his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). I am glad I read that passage.

"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me," Paul writes (v. 7). I certainly struggle with "becoming conceited." The fear I wrestle with is actually pride: What do they think of me? Am I articulate enough to impress them? I have genuine abilities, but maybe I need my phobia to keep me from being conceited.

"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me" (v. 8). Unlike Paul, who stopped after three times, I was still pleading for my inarticulateness to be removed.

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (vv. 9-10). Here was an incredible promise: God could do whatever needed to be done through me even if I was inarticulate. Somehow God's power even becomes more perfect in our weakness.

God could do whatever needed to be done through me even if I was inarticulate. Somehow God's power even becomes more perfect in our weakness.

It was like a load lifted from my shoulders. All my life I felt that I had to be articulate for God to use me. But here God was reassuring me that I can be used even if I sputter. Though the idea ran counter to logic, the Spirit somehow enabled me to believe it.

I spent the last couple days before Denver memorizing the passage. I said it to myself whenever anxiety hit me. I was fairly anxiety-free the whole time of the meeting.

Ever since that blessed devotional time, I have a new freedom and ease of speaking.

As I continue reading the Bible, most mornings nothing strikes me, only thoughts I already know. When we take a walk, nothing particularly meaningful usually happens. Yet soaking in the atmosphere rejuvenates us. I'm thankful God coaxed me into the habit of taking time each morning to let the Word wash over me.

Harold N. Miller lives in Corning, N.Y.

Correction: We inadvertently ommitted words from Susan Sommer's poem "Watching Ice Form on Shavehead Lake" (Jan. 26). The last two lines should read: "But gained is all the subtlety / Of ice congealed while ducks swim free." We apologize for the error.

Exodus movie gets scholar's help

Stephen Reid thinks *The Prince of Egypt,* the blockbuster movie about the Exodus, will go down in Bible film history. One reason was the filmmakers' attention to detail, such as calling in Reid as a consultant on the movie's animation of slaves.

Reid, an African-American, teaches Old Testament at Austin (Texas) Presbyterian Theological Seminary and attends Austin Mennonite Church. He made two trips to Hollywood to screen the movie.

Reid noted that Hollywood slaves "usually look like they came out of World Gym," he told the *Austin American-Statesman*. Instead, slaves generally had potbellies and spindly legs because their work primarily involved arm and back muscles.

Reid has also consulted on the *Mysteries of the Bible* series on the Arts & Entertainment cable TV network.

Correction: Youth Venture is a program of both Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Home Ministries. It was identified as only an MBM program in "Service Team Raising Funds for Colombian Center" in the Jan. 26 issue.

Putting money where beliefs are

MMA's socially responsible investing expanding

GOSHEN, Ind.—It wasn't Mark Regier's money that got him a White House invitation last month. Rather, it was someone else's.

As socially responsible investing (SRI) research and advocacy coordinator for Mennonite Mutual Aid, Regier helps investigate, assess and advocate ways to invest that are conducive to the values of MMA and its investors. "Our commitment to stewardship comes out of our Anabaptist commitment to following Christ in all of life," he says.

That means investing MMA's $1 billion in assets—including Mennonite Foundation, Mennonite Retirement Trust, insurance funds and Praxis mutual funds—in companies screened for social justice, human rights and environmental issues, including no alcohol, tobacco, gambling and weapons and defense contracting. At the same time, investments need to be financially productive.

Regier

"To do that, we need to be careful how our resources are used," Regier says.

Conduct and wages: He and representatives from some 100 apparel companies and human rights, labor and religious groups met with government officials Jan. 13 for a discussion as part of a White House initiative, called the Apparel Industry Partnership (AIP), to eliminate sweatshops. The meeting was held at the Old Executive Office Building, next door to the White House.

The AIP is proposing a code of workplace conduct for apparel manufacturers and monitoring methods. Regier calls it an important first step but laments the absence of a call for paying workers a living wage.

"We believe the issue of a living wage is critical," he says. "[Investors] would like to know their clothing is not made by people who can't feed their families and take care of themselves."

Those concerns have taken Regier to Mexico for on-site visits with Johnson & Johnson officials about the wages it pays its workers in plants along the U.S. border. Advocacy efforts have also included sponsoring shareholder resolutions at Hewlett Packard, Deere & Company, Atlantic Richfield and May Department Stores.

"We feel it's part of our [investment] management responsibility to take these issues to the companies," Regier says.

Socially responsible investing is gaining in popularity. The number of people investing in Praxis has jumped 173 percent since the funds were started in 1993, from 6,700 investors to 18,000. The amount of money in the funds grew from $52 million to $162 million during that time, an increase of 212 percent. Nearly 10 percent of all investments in the United States are in SRI portfolios such as Praxis.

SRI tithing: A new facet to MMA's SRI work is community-development investing, what Regier calls "the tithing approach" to socially responsible investing. It channels some of MMA's assets to people who may otherwise be marginalized by conventional financial institutions and practices—for example, loans for inner-city development.

MMA's community-development investing was approved last December, and Regier anticipates as much as $30 million will be invested in the program in the next several years.

While community-development investing may offer returns short of market rates, Regier says, socially responsible investing does not have to mean sacrificing financial gain. In 1998, its first full year, MMA's Praxis International placed in the top 10 percent of foreign stocks with a return of 24 percent. Overall, a 1998 report showed that Domini 400, an index of socially screened corporations, outpaced the S&P 500, a popular index of unscreened corporations, 24.29 percent compared to 23.06 percent over the previous five years.

Regier says such statistics are evidence that socially responsible investing "has little or no effect on the bottom line."

To develop further its SRI program, MMA, with Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., is preparing for a fall conference of academicians, theologians and business people, Regier says, "basically asking the question, What do Mennonites or Anabaptists believe business should be doing?"—*Rich Preheim*

Brazilian Mennonites build bridge to Mozambique as church prepares to send first missionaries

CEILANDIA, Brazil—Despite health risks, religious barriers and language difficulties, Mennonites in Brazil are preparing for their first overseas mission effort.

Joao de Brito, a Brazilian Mennonite pastor, and Janet Plenert, executive director of JMMI, the mission board of the Brazil Mennonite Church (AEM), returned Jan. 28 from a two-week visit to Mozambique. De Brito and his wife, Rosa, will go to Mozambique later this year as the first missionaries sent by JMMI.

"What I had believed with my head for several years, that South-South mission efforts make as much sense as traditional North-South relation, I saw confirmed," says Plenert, who with her husband, Steve, serves in Brazil with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The purpose of the trip was to build bridges between the two national church groups, discuss a vision for missions and begin preparations for sending the de Brito family, including exploring housing options, opening a bank account, looking for a language helper and checking schools.

De Brito and Plenert spent most of their time with Mennonites in the northern province of Tete. Mozambique is listed as the 10th poorest country in the world, and Tete is "in the most desperate of situations," Plenert says. The region is plagued with cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, malnutrition and an HIV infection rate estimated to be as high as 33 percent.

"It's difficult to imagine ministering in this region without addressing the issue of basic preventative health care and hygiene," Plenert says.

The beginnings of AEM's mission work in Mozambique—a country where, like Brazil, Portuguese is the official language—came in 1995 when AEM contacted Fremont and Sara Regier, then Mozambique country representatives for Mennonite Central Committee. AEM's president visited Mozambique the next year.

Despite her objections, AEM last July named Plenert JMMI executive secretary. "I stated missiological reasons—it needs to be a Brazilian," she says. "They recognized this, had discussed this and still felt I would lead with integrity based on experience. They were treating me as an insider, a member of the Brazil church. It was a big compliment."

The work in Mozambique will not be easy. In addition to high unemployment among the population, health risks and a harsh, dry climate, there are religious barriers, Plenert says.

GCMC/MBM/AEM photo by Janet Plenert

Mozambican women sing during a worship service in a Mennonite congregation in the northern province of Tete. Representatives from the Brazil Mennonite Church visited Mozambique last month in preparation for sending to the country the church's first missionaries later this year.

"Traditional African worship, traditional healers and forms of witchcraft are still common, and the evidence of them is abundant," she says. "The missionaries we visited all warned us of the need to be prepared for open spiritual warfare. I consider a very positive advantage of Brazilians ministering in Africa to be that we already face and minister in a context of open spiritual warfare."

Language is another concern. Although Mozambique's official language is Portuguese, Plenert says, the Mennonites use the tribal language of Nhungue. "To complicate matters further, there is no Bible in the Nhungue language, although there is in Chichewa, which people say they understand," Plenert says.

Nevertheless, she says there is much reason for optimism. "The Mennonite church leaders were extremely open to receiving us, in fact almost too open," she says. "The overeagerness to receive missionaries from Brazil results in the Mozambicans believing the missionaries will teach them everything they need to know. We had to emphasize over and over that we are coming in a support role, that the Holy Spirit is already working among them and we are only coming to help strengthen what they are already doing."—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC, MBM and AEM news services*

> We had to emphasize over and over that we are coming in a support role, that the Holy Spirit is already working among them.
>
> *—Janet Plenert*

Birth of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Mozambique

Mozambicans Razo Meneses and Fernando Abreu-Sitande were members of another denomination when they stumbled across a tract from the Church of God in Christ Mennonite (Holdeman) in Brazil and were attracted to the theology. Meneses and Abreu-Sitande started a new church in Mozambique, calling themselves the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Mozambique, holding the first service April 10, 1991. In 1994, Rudy Wiens, a Canadian Mennonite working for World Vision in Mozambique, found the group and started offering support and orientation to Mennonite theology and practice. The church today has about 30 congregations and 1,500 members.—*GCMC, MBM and AEM news services*

Colombian Mennonites receive quake aid

ARMENIA, Colombia—North American Mennonite agencies have committed nearly $60,000 to assist Colombian Mennonite in their responses after the Jan. 25 earthquake which destroyed two-thirds of the city of Armenia.

The quake, which measured 6.0 on the Richter scale, is thought to be the worst on record in Colombia, killing as many as 2,000 people, injuring 15,000 and leaving homeless 200,000 of Armenia's 300,000 residents.

Mennonite Central Committee has sent $25,000 to Mencoldes, the Colombian Mennonite development agency, and will send another $25,000, to be used for local purchases of food, water, medical supplies, generators and radios. MCC will also consider other aid requests. Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has sent $5,000 to Colombia and will also funnel any funds received from the community. The Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) has committed nearly $4,500 for the Colombia Mennonite Church.

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In addition, the Japan Mennonite Fellowship, the cooperating body of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Japan, has collected $500 to send to MBM and COM administrators Greg Rake and Ron Flaming, who will be making a previously scheduled visit to Colombia later this month.

Other offers of assistance have come from Mennonite and Mennonite-related groups from areas near Armenia.

Earlier reports from Armenia said the city's Mennonite church had been destroyed in the quake. Although heavily damaged—part of the roof and one wall had fallen—the building is still standing and being used as a distribution center for food and medicine. The house of pastor Antonio Herrera was one of the few in the neighborhood not destroyed.

COM and MBM together have five workers in Colombia. MCC has no workers in the country.

COM worker Gamaliel Falla says many members of the Armenia Mennonite Church, as well as others throughout the city, are living and sleeping in the street because of massive damage to their homes. One unconfirmed report said that one person from the family of a congregation member was killed.

Falla is based in Calí, about 100 miles southwest of Armenia. He visited Armenia the day after the quake.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC, MBM and MCC news services*

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Cancer claims Indiana-Michigan minister

GOSHEN, Ind.—Charlotte Holsopple Glick, the first woman to serve full-time as a Mennonite Church conference minister, died Feb. 8 after a two-year battle with cancer. She was 51.

From 1993 until her death, Glick was a regional conference minister for Indiana-Michigan Conference, responsible for the 40 congregations in the Goshen, Elkhart and South Bend, Ind., areas. From 1980 to 1990, she and her husband, Del, pastored at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, becoming Indiana-Michigan's first husband-and-wife pastoral team. She had recently completed a chapter about being a woman pastor for a book to be released by Herald Press this summer.

Glick also was a board member of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, serving as chair from 1987 to 1990, an instructor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart and coordinator of the 1979 Mennonite Church youth convention in Waterloo, Ont.

Survivors include her husband, Del, who is assistant moderator of the Mennonite Church, and their 16-year-old daughter, Renee.

Africa peacemaking focus of MCC consultation

NAIROBI, Kenya—Expatriate Mennonites bring a sense of community to peace work in Africa, creating a "positive globalization" in which communities share their peace traditions, a Kenyan development worker said at a December 1998 consultation of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers in Africa. Without those community traditions, said Sultan Somje, peace becomes a business.

The consultation was designed to explore the role of expatriate peacemakers in Africa. Of the 75 MCC workers on the continent, 12 work full-time in peacemaking and conflict resolution.

Issues addressed included religion, traditional methods of conflict resolution, length of MCC terms, cultural expectations and funding.—*MCC News Service*

Pa. high school unveils new athletic facility

LANCASTER, Pa.—Lancaster Mennonite High School opened its new $3.6 million Center for Sports and Fitness on Jan. 22 with a ceremony in the morning and a boys' basketball game that evening.

"The generosity of our friends reminds us of the generous God who calls us to be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us," principal Richard Thomas said at the opening ceremony.

The facility includes a 1,500-seat gym, fitness room, training room, locker rooms, classrooms and renovations to the old gym.

by the way ...

Mountain Lake, Minn., Mennonite carpenter William Regier manufactured 7 million clothespins between March 1945 and November 1946, when there was a clothespin shortage due to World War II .—*Mennonite Life*

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Workers

Beachey, Sarah, San Antonio, Texas, is beginning a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) in Topeka, Kan., as a physical therapist aide.
Hoover, Pearl, has completed a pastorate at Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.
Krehbiel, Mason, Moundridge, Kan., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Richmond, Va., as a construction assistant.
Smith, Jeff, in December began a pastorate at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.
Welty, Lavon J., on Feb. 1 became half-time associate conference minister for the eastern Central District Conference.

Births

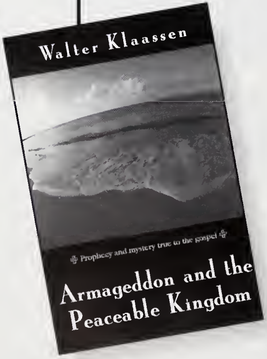
August, Kristin Giang Huong, July 25, 1998, received for adoption Dec. 22, 1998, by MaryEllen (Nissley) and Stephen August, Baltimore.
Bartek, Chloe Jane, Dec. 17, to Joe and Joni (Siebert) Bartek, Omaha, Neb.
Berg, Zachery Peter, Dec. 30, to Cathy (Beery) and Terry Berg, Comins, Mich.
Clark, Hunter Jacob Yoder, Dec. 14, 1998, received for adoption Dec. 17, 1998, by Carrie (Yoder) and Brian Clark, Sarasota, Fla.
Drang, Erin, Jan. 19, to Chris (Oyer) and James Drang Jr., Kouts, Ind.
Gaeddert, Keely Katherine, Jan. 14, to Bradley and Katherine (Graham) Gaeddert, Prairie Village, Kan.
Hoffer, Johanna Eisemann, Jan. 21, to Jan (Eisemann) and Jeffrey Hoffer, Lancaster, Pa.
Hughes, Anika Lee, Dec. 31, to Cambria (Handrich) and Dan Hughes, St. Ignace, Mich.
Hutton, Emily, Jan. 11, to Karri (Roth) and Rick Hutton, Peoria, Ariz.
Lambright, Emmanuel Paul, Dec. 26, to Charity (Wenger) and Wayne Lambright, Sarasota, Fla.
Longacher, Anna Mitchell, Jan. 15, to Amy and Joshua Longacher, Norfolk, Va.
Mast, Mariah Elizabeth, Dec. 30, to Daniel and Lori (Martin) Mast, Parkesburg, Pa.
Nisly, Olivia Jean, Jan. 28, to Carly and Jenny (Hochstedler) Nisly, Kalona, Iowa.
Pechanec, Justin Tyler, Dec. 29, to Jason and Susan (Reusser) Pechanec, Derby, Kan.
Strait, Courtney Elizabeth, Jan. 26, to Dave and Nancy (Latshaw) Strait, Bath, N. Y.
Walters, Maya Sun, May 26, 1998, received for adoption Jan. 15 by Richard and Sanna (Yoder) Walters, Minneapolis.

Marriages

Carroll/McLane: Brian Carroll, Bronx, N.Y., and Heather McLane, State College, Pa., Dec. 19, at University Mennonite Church, State College.
Snook/Yoder: Grace Snook, DuBois, Pa., and John Yoder, Belleville, Pa., Jan. 16, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Deaths

Alderfer, Isaiah, 86, Harleysville, Pa., died Dec. 18 of acute myocardial infarction. Spouse: (1st) Lovina Clemens Alderfer (deceased); (2nd) Irene Benner Alderfer. Parents: Harvey and Susan Alderfer (deceased). Other survivors: children Rhoda Benner, Lois Zook, Rachel Hartzler, Ralph, David; 15 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 23 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Baker, Mildred, 71, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Donald Baker. Other survivors: son Robert; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 1 at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Neb.
Birky, Lorna Birky, 70, Valparaiso, Ind., died Jan. 16. Spouse: Orville Birky. Parents: Dean and Hazel Fleener Birky (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 19 at Kouts, Ind.
Detweiler, Delson Dee, 28, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 21 from a car and train accident. Spouse: Barbara Detweiler. Parents: Wilton and Delores Detweiler. Other survivors: child Tierney; brother Dennis. Funeral: Jan. 25 at First United Methodist Church, York, Neb.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Detweiler, Dortha Stutzman, 88, Albany, Ore., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Elmer Detweiler (deceased). Parents: Ora and Lydia Boshart Stutzman (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Lois Kuhns, Carol Gross, Don; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Gingerich, Cyril, 77, Zurich, Ont., died Jan. 20. Spouse: Carol Erb Gingerich. Parents: Jacob and Pearl Gingerich (deceased). Memorial service: Jan. 23 at Zurich Mennonite Church.

Headings, Gertie Garver, 87, Plain City, Ohio, died Jan. 17. Spouse: Chauncey Headings. Parents: David and Fannie Garver (deceased). Other survivors: children Vernon, Jerry, Fred, Velma Miller, Norman, Mary Lou Miller, Martha Beachy, Alice Schlabach, Delmar, Ester Campbell; 38 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 20 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.

Kuhns, Clarence, 80, Chambersburg, Pa., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Mabel Diller Kuhns (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Leah Horst Kuhns (deceased). Survivors: children Eunice Sauder, Anna Predoti, Evelyn Schliestett, Nancy Leatherman, Fern, Miriam, Jay, James, Nathan; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Diller Mennonite Church, Newville, Pa.

Lehman, Donovan, 67, Dalton, Ohio, died Jan. 13. Parents: Willis and Sarean Amstutz Lehman (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 16 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Oswald, Alvin, 94, Shickley, Neb., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Susie Springer (deceased). Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Birky Oswald (deceased). Survivors: children James, Gerald, Elaine Good; 11 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 11 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

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Oyer, Lona, 96, Chenoa, Ill., died Dec. 31. Spouse: Lester Oyer (deceased). Parents: Ben and LaVina Sharp (deceased). Survivors: children June Kirkton, Carol Kramer, Judith Robinson; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 6 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa, Ill.

Rocke, Cecil, 78, Pontiac, Ill., died Dec. 4. Spouse: Frances Rocke. Parents: Joseph and Ella Rocke (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Crutcher, Linda Brucker, Ella Pennington; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa, Ill.

Roggie, Elmer, 88, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Lola Zehr Roggie (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Anna Widrick Roggie (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Charlotte Ross, Bertha, Claire, Orpha Wilson, Rhoda Snider; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 23 at Lowville (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Roth, Dwight, 92, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 20. Spouse: (1st) Lillian Schrock Roth (deceased); (2nd) Maynona Ranallo Roth. Parents: Harry and Ellen Burkhart Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children Janet Bradford, Vicki Mast, Nancy Hutchison; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Snider, James, 66, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 19. Spouse: Pauline Snider. Other survivors: children James, Donald, Kerry, Doran; two grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 23 at Salem Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Thieszen, Abraham, 90, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Martha Epp Thieszen (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Elizabeth Peters Thieszen (deceased). Survivors: children Esther Quiring, Erna Rempel, Edwin; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 15 at Henderson, Neb.

Conference of Mennonites in Canada

GENERAL SECRETARY

The Conference of Mennonites in Canada seeks a full-time General Secretary to begin serving in the proposed new Mennonite Church Canada in August 1999.

As the chief executive officer, the General Secretary will be responsible for implementing the mission and vision of the transformed church in Canada, as well as supervising the staff and coordinating the total program.

Appointed by and reporting to the General Board, the General Secretary relates closely to the various program boards and committees of the Church. In addition, she/he carries primary responsibility for building and maintaining relationships with Canadian area conferences and congregations.

The assignment also includes fostering partnership with the emerging new Mennonite Church US, as well as relating to other church bodies. Important qualifications include a strong personal faith, seminary and/or other graduate theological education, pastoral or church leadership experience, and proven ability to implement major organizational change.

Applicants must have a demonstrated Christian commitment from an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective, and a passion for the ministry and mission of the church.

Strong leadership and communication skills, organizational and administrative strength, personal flexibility, and willingness to travel are essential. The ability to relate to a wide spectrum of persons and a broad theological diversity are also requirements.

This position will reside in Winnipeg and be part of the new Mennonite Church Canada, if delegates at St. Louis 99 approve that proposal.

Please submit a letter of application with resume and three references by February 28, 1999, to:

Ron Sawatsky
Chair of Search Committee
134 Woodbend Cres.
Waterloo, ON, N2T 1G9

Wilt, Irene Lee, 89, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, died Jan. 14. Spouse: Everett Wilt. Parents: John and Eva Lee Wilt (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Martinez, Walter, Robert; six grandchildren; two step grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; two step great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Mount Pleasant.

classifieds

Classified advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. To place a classified ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Experienced bricklayers** and mason tenders needed in the central Texas area. Call Quality Brickworks, Inc., 254-722-6060.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks a ***1/3-time music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Feb. 25, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church**, Sarasota, Fla., seeks resumes of people interested in serving as ***minister of youth and young adults***. Candidates should submit their resume or letter of interest to A. Jerome Yoder, chair, Search Committee, Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, 4041 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34232.

- **Central Christian School**, Kidron, Ohio, has ***openings for fall 1999:*** administration—assistant principal, director of development; faculty—industrial arts, physical education, varsity soccer coach; staff—music department secretary (20 hr./week).

  Contact Frederic Miller, 330-857-7311; or CCHS_fmiller@tccsa.ohio.gov.

- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a ***five-week teaching program*** in China this summer. One week of orientation and sightseeing in Beijing is included. Teaching experience not required.

  For more information, contact CEE, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; fax 540-434-5556; email ChinaEdEx@aol.com.

- **Souderton Mennonite Church** seeks a full-time ***minister of worship and outreach***. Qualifications include solid commitment to Anabaptist theology, passion for worship and skills in organizing people for outreach ministry. Not a preaching assignment.

  Send resume to Souderton Mennonite Church, attn. Leadership Search Committee, 105 W. Chestnut St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **First Mennonite Church** is a mature, General Conference congregation of 225 members situated near downtown Saskatoon. We are in need of a full-time experienced ***associate pastor*** with an Anabaptist foundation. This person will have strong gifts in teaching, leadership and outreach; will be Spirit-filled, highly motivated with good interpersonal skills; will have the ability to reach out to the broader community, especially younger generations.

  Please send resumes to Search Committee, c/o Albert Warkentin, 112-2305 Adelaide St. East, Saskatoon, SK S7J 5H6.

- **The International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an immediate opening for a ***one-year voluntary service*** assignment. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility, with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian, homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

  Contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email IGH-DC@juno.com.

- **Rainbow Mennonite Church** (Kansas City, Kan.), a talented, diverse, growing urban church (175 members), seeks a new ***pastor(s)*** to begin September 1999. The congregation has identified five areas (in ranked order) as the most important: preaching/worship leadership, teaching, spirituality, crisis pastoral visitation, and community activities. The gift of encouraging openness and inclusiveness in relating to congregational diversity is expected, as well as a strong commitment to Anabaptist teachings.

  Please contact, by March 9, Karen Goering Hostetler, 1305 Ruby, Kansas City, KS 66103-1043; 913-371-3057; email kghcvh@gvi.net.

- **Mennonite/Amish heritage tour** directed by Peter Wiebe and Vi Unruh, May 25-June 8, 1999. Leaving from Yoder, Kan., and stopping in Missouri, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Ontario, Pennsylvania and Washington D.C. Cost $1,097. Call 800-364-2320.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community** seeks ***director of residential services***. For over 59 years Rockhill Mennonite Community has provided older adults with a caring, supportive environment. We currently have an exciting opportunity for a director in our residential services department. This individual will counsel residents and families, document all resident needs/interactions, act as liaison and coordinate resources with community agencies. He or she will also supervise several staff members and carry a small caseload. MSW and long-term care experience required.

  Rockhill Mennonite Community offers competitive salary, benefits and opportunities for professional growth. Please send resume with salary requirements by Feb. 23 to Rockhill Mennonite Community, Attn. Carol, 3250 State Road, Sellersville, PA 18960; fax 215-257-7390. EOE

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks ***wellness center director*** to open new wellness center in spring of 2000, and expand existing wellness program for VMRC residents, staff and community seniors. Candidate must have minimum of bachelor's degree, appropriate certifications and experience directing a wellness-fitness program for older adults and employees. Successful candidate will have strong marketing and research skills, ability to direct center operations, build networks and facilitate teamwork.

  Qualified candidates submit one-page letter describing wellness philosophy, resume and salary history to Director of Human Resources, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; fax 540-564-3700; email hr@vmrc.org; www.vmrc.org.

Mennonite Central Committee
invites applications for the position of:

Director of International Programs

Starting date: August 1999
Location: Akron, Pennsylvania
Applications accepted through April 2, 1999

Direct inquiries and applications to:
Dwight McFadden, Director of Human Resources,
MCC, 21 South 12th St., PO Box 500,
Akron PA 17501-0500

Qualifications: An understanding of MCC as a service agency founded by North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. Experience in international programs with strong cross-cultural skills. Administrative and overseas experience, with strong conceptual and analytical skills for program design, planning and evaluation. College/University Degree required, master's degree preferred.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S.
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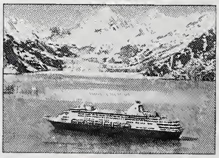

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by Gordon Houser

Since this issue's date falls on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, let's look at Lent. Although Mennonites have generally steered clear of many of the traditions of the liturgical churches, evidence shows increasing interest among us in the various seasons of the Christian calendar.

Most of us, I imagine, have heard of Lent, the period of 40 days (plus the six Sundays) between Ash Wednesday and Easter. It is traditionally a time of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and conversion in preparation for Easter, the greatest feast of the Christian year. Its current length was established in the seventh century. Originally the Lenten fast was strict and allowed for only one meal toward evening, with meat and fish forbidden. Eastern Christians have maintained something of this discipline, but not most other Christians.

When I was growing up, my mother and I often gave up something for Lent—usually candy or desserts. I knew it was connected with religion, but it seemed more a part of the secular culture. Today it seems totally foreign to our secular culture.

Except for the abundance of dieting books, videos and workshops, I can't imagine any practice more antithetical to our society than fasting during Lent. Our culture tells us to satisfy our desires, and if we can't think of any, there are plenty of ads to tell us just what we should have. For that matter, I don't hear many churches encouraging fasting, whether during Lent or at other times.

For those wanting to observe Lent, the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church and the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church have produced "Unrevealed Until Its Season … Worship and Spirituality Resources for Lent/Holy Week/Easter 1999" (available for $10 from MBCM, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245, or COE, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114).

The Upper Room Ministries, P.O. Box 189, Nashville, TN 37202-0189, has also produced some helpful resources for Lent. These include *Genesis of Grace: A Lenten Book of Days* by John Indermark and *A Lenten Journey: Travels in the Spiritual Life Based on the Gospel of Mark* by Larry R. Kalajainen. Each costs $9.95.

Here's your chance to be countercultural. Try fasting and prayer for the next six weeks.

Rhubarb is a new magazine published quarterly by the Mennonite Literary Society. Its premiere issue came out in November 1998. That 44-page issue, which focused on peace, included essays, poetry, fiction, photography, criticism, reviews and humor (since it's published in Canada, they call it "humour"). The magazine welcomes submissions of fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry. Subscriptions are $25 Cdn. ($20 U.S.) per year. Write *Rhubarb*, 200 Lenore St., Winnipeg, MB R3G 2C5, mennolit@mb.sympatico.ca.

TV

"Facing the Truth with Bill Moyers" is a two-hour documentary scheduled to air on PBS on March 30, but check your local listings. Moyers looks at the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa.

books

Theology is often viewed merely as an academic discipline. But according to Orthodox writer Kallistos Ware: "The true aim of theology is not rational certainty through abstract argument but personal communion with God through prayer." This serves as a premise to *Mystical Theology: The Science of Love* (Orbis, 1997, $18), William Johnston's 10th book on Christian mysticism. Mystical theology, he writes, is "theological reflection on the secret wisdom that comes from love." This book represents Johnston's attempt to rewrite such theology for a new era. He summarizes the history of mystical theology, then dialogues with science, Eastern religious practices and our current social and political context. The reading is slow going in places but well worth the effort.

music

Joyful Ditty by Road Less Travelled ($15 for CD, $10 for cassette) is indeed joyful. RLT consists of Doug and Jude Krehbiel, who wrote all but one of the 12 songs on this, their fifth recording. Their "eclectic acoustic" music draws on bluegrass, country, R&B, Irish and gospel. They mix guitar, bass, dulcimer, banjo, dobro, harmonica, recorder, penny whistle, mandolin and percussion with tight harmonies in a richly produced recording. The lyrics reflect fun, concern for justice and care for creation. Highlights for me are "Harvey County Summer Day," "Prairie Song (Yodel Song)" and the ballad "The Day We Fell in Love." The few weaker songs are the earliest written, which shows that this group has matured. Order from RLT, 1125 N. Ash, Newton, KS 67114, rltmusic@southwind.net.

Readers' recommendations

Jalane D. Schmidt, Somerville, Mass., writes that *Eve's Bayou* is "one of the best films" she saw last year. She goes on, "It has an unusual setting and cast of characters, is wonderfully written, has excellent acting and lush cinematography." It is available on video.

David E. Ortman, Seattle, recommends the book *End-Time Visions: The Road to Armageddon!* by Richard Abanes (Four Walls Eight Windows, 1998). He writes that it "covers the Armageddon landscape of false preachers and false predictions." Abanes, he writes, "points out that end-time predictions are directly contrary to New Testament warnings" in Matthew 24:42, 44; Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 and Revelation 3:3.

Sharon K. Williams, Souderton, Pa., alerts readers to a variety of TV specials broadcast in February on PBS as part of Black History Month. Among them are these: "I'll Make Me a World: A Century of African-American Artists," "Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir: Live at Madison Square Garden," "A Great Day in Harlem," "In Performance at the White House: Cece Winans, Glorious Gospel" and a repeat of last fall's "Africans in America: America's Journey Through Slavery," which was recommended in this column (Nov. 10, 1998).

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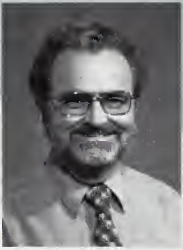

J. Lorne Peachey

Only by prayer and fasting

In his Mediaculture column this issue (page 15), associate editor Gordon Houser suggests the church consider fasting with prayer during the six weeks of Lent. As editor I join my voice to his. These are spiritual disciplines that have a way of concentrating thoughts and energies on God and God's power.

I suggest that members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) consider fasting for at least one meal during each of three two-week periods this Lent. We could fast and pray about three things:

Feb. 21-March 6: For ourselves as the church.

We Mennonites are becoming an angry and impatient people. Following publication of two issues on the church's stand on homosexuality (Jan. 19 and Jan. 26), this magazine received 150 letters and emails in one week. This included 60 subscription cancellations. While there were many reasons for these, a dominant theme was the fact that this publication—and, by extension, both denominations—continues to wrestle with this issue. Words like "disgrace," "pro-homos," and "homosexual diatribe" punctuated the responses. Several writers said they are looking for another church.

Does the Spirit of God have new ways for us to clothe the naked, feed the hungry and free those who are oppressed?

There is equal impatience on the other side: "Why can't we be a more accepting people? Why are we still drawing lines and setting boundaries?" The sides are fast ending up shouting at each other. That's one reason we've decided to discontinue the discussion in Readers Say for a time (see note at left).

During these two weeks, we might pray for patience, for a willingness to listen and for new insights about how to be firm in our convictions but gentle in our disagreements.

March 7-March 20: For the churchwide consultation on membership and homosexuality.

From March 11 to 14, representatives from area conferences, racial-ethnic groups and committees responsible for giving leadership to integration will gather near Kansas City to work at questions related to membership in the new Mennonite Church. This includes the difficult issues of church discipline and homosexuality. The goal is to find enough common ground to make recommendations to the general boards, which will refine them for delegate response in St. Louis this summer.

During these two weeks, we might pray for the planners of this consultation, for those invited to attend and for all of us in the church as we learn the results of this gathering and seek to mesh them with our beliefs and convictions on this issue, whatever they may be.

March 21-April 3: For our future.

Whatever recommendations the membership consultation will make, we must ask ourselves what we believe is the calling for the new Mennonite Church for the future. We have Vision: Healing and Hope to guide us. How do we put this vision into practice?

I find a way in Isaiah 58:6-8. "The kind of fasting I want," God says, "calls you to free those who are wrongly imprisoned and to stop oppressing those who work for you. ... I want you to share your food with the hungry and to welcome poor wanderers into your homes. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. If you do these things, your salvation will come like the dawn" (New Living Translation).

Our fasting and prayer must be put into action. We need to ask ourselves: Is the way we have done things in the past the way for the future? Or does the Spirit of God have new ways for us to clothe the naked, feed the hungry and free those who are oppressed, both in our midst and in the world around us?

During this third fast, we might pray for new eyes to see a clearer vision, new ears to hear the Spirit's voice and new understandings of how the gospel meets the challenges of today's world, whatever these may be.

"This can only be done by prayer and fasting," Jesus told his disciples when they were at their wits' end about how to proceed (Mark 9:14-29). GC and MC churches may well be at a similar place on the eve of becoming one. For that reason we who edit this publication join the voices of others in the church for a period of prayer and fasting during this year's Lent.—*jlp*

Ending the debate: To allow space for discussion of other issues facing the church, we have decided to print no more letters in response to our two issues on homosexuality (Jan. 19 and Jan. 26) after the next issue, Feb. 23.—*jlp*

theMennonite

February 23, 1999

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membership

Where are we headed?

8 Stand on promises, not codes of conduct
10 New youth convention coordinator named
12 Peace theology for Reconciliation Walkers
20 No longer snakes or children of snakes

The discussions continue

I appreciated the recent series on homosexuality and the church. My concern lies less with the content of the articles than with the position of the authors within the Mennonite church. With all due respect to Weldon Nisly ("Homosexuality and the Healing of the Church," Jan. 19) and Martin W. Lehman ("Toward Common Ground," Jan. 26) and their work, they hold very different positions in the church than does John D. Roth ("Why the Mennonite Church Does Not Regard Same-Sex Marriages as a Christian Option," Jan. 19 and 26). I am frustrated that the editors chose Roth, a well-known scholar in Mennonite circles, to present the less controversial perspective and chose less well-known authors to present alternative views. Professional differences may influence not only writing styles but also the way readers interpret and react to the message. If *The Mennonite* is committed to exploring the issue of homosexuality and the church with integrity, there is no room for tacit influences or implicit endorsement of a particular view. Perhaps next time the editors should consider more carefully how they choose participants in the discourse.
—Ryan J. Sauder, Pittsburgh

I have found that within the last six months, if not longer, the letters to the editor seem filled with comments from all across the country on homosexuality. I have to admit I've become quite exasperated with the arguments. While I understand that the recent articles (Jan. 19 and 26) will probably not put an end to the debate, I sincerely hope that our Mennonite brothers and sisters will remember the love we've shared in the past and will hopefully continue to share in the future. Love our brethren, welcome newcomers to the church, uphold the Word of our Lord, but most of all, pray for those who have not yet found the blessings, grace and forgiveness of our Savior, Jesus Christ. With those strong foundations in place and adhered to, the Mennonite church will surely thrive.
—Laurel Peters-Klenda, Omaha, Neb.

The Mennonite made a wise and courageous decision in addressing as it did the anguish-laden debate concerning homosexuality in our church. The conversation took place charitably and respectfully. Roth stood up for the traditional position self-critically. I was deeply impressed by the fruit of Lehman's and Lederach's soul searching. The Jan. 19 editorial's call for patience and waiting is on the mark. Because the exploration of sexuality involves primal and often unconscious levels of response and because homosexuality has become the flash point and case study for moral conviction in our time, we need a long span of time to work through it. Having one side win over the other side would short-circuit the individual and corporate soul-searching which is the prerequisite for arriving at a spiritually and theologically authentic conviction.*—John Rempel, New York*

The recent articles on homosexuality and the church should help the maturing process of the church with respect to homosexuality and to other issues as well. We often need reminders that God's timetable is quite different from ours. There are some voices that would sacrifice the church for the sake of immediacy. The long view, which allows for continuous dialogue, mutual respect and unity, puts us in touch with history. During the last century, some denominations split over slavery, with both sides quoting Scripture to prove their point. Those Scriptures are still there and they have not changed. But we have changed in our perspective and understanding. Thanks for keeping to the high ground in *The Mennonite.*
—Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.

I appreciated Roth's articles, but several others were very disturbing because they were based solely on acceptance by an experience. Our experiences must and will come under the scrutiny of the Word of God. Openness to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit will produce a godly sorrow for any and all sins as we become aware of them and how displeasing they are to God. Sins must be repented of to be in right relationship with our wonderful Savior. But if we continue in sinful ways, we displease God and his blessing cannot be upon us. I am naive enough to believe that the God who walked the earth and changed the lives of people who were willing to come to him can and will do so today.*—Earl Moyer, Sellersville, Pa.*

Unlike Roth, I don't believe one can set personal experience aside as a separate and lesser authority for the church. Through personal experience, we each encounter God in a unique balance of Scripture and tradition.

I'm a Christian who grew up Mennonite. I'm also a lesbian and a baptized member of First Metropolitan Community Church in Wichita, Kan. As a part of the church, the body of Christ, when you hurt and deny me, you hurt

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.*—Editors*

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Vol. 2, No. 8, February 23, 1999

features

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readers say

and deny the church, you hurt and deny God. Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people are essential to the church—the body is not whole without us. We are created by God, who rejoices in us daily, as we live our lives fully.—*Kirsten R. Blosser, Wichita, Kan.*

Roth in his Jan. 26 article states that certain attitudes toward gays and lesbians are often mean-spirited, wrong and "contrary to basic Christian decency, and they violate the spirit and letter of Scripture, our Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition and the recent statement of the church."

While these attitudes may be contrary to Christian decency, I don't think these mean-spirited and wrong attitudes violate Anabaptist-Mennonite traditions at all. How else do you explain the excommunications and church splits that have resulted from the use of the English language in worship, Sunday schools, the plain coat for men, uncut hair for women, the prayer veiling, divorce and remarriage and the ordination of women, to name just a few issues?

Now again some of the church's members and conferences are behaving according to tradition: Be judgmental, throw out those who disagree and let the next generation ask for forgiveness.—*J.B. Miller, Chicago*

Thank you, Paul Lederach, for your sensitive story (Speaking Out, Jan. 26). I request that all of us who profess to be Christians adopt Jesus' all-inclusive way of life and extend grace to all gays and lesbians who come to Christ, to all gays and lesbians who do not come to Christ, to all nongays and nonlesbians who come to Christ and to to all nongays and nonlesbians who do not come to Christ. This is quite a bit of grace, but let's check it out with the Master Grace Giver, who has promised enough for all.—*Jake Buhler, Hanoi, Vietnam*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Ending the debate: To allow space for discussion of other issues facing the church, this issue of *The Mennonite* is the last to publish letters in response to the Jan. 19 and 26 issues on homosexuality and the church.

Correction: Gwen Peachey's letter in the Feb. 9 issue should have referred to the video *Body of Dissent*. The name of the video was incorrect in the letter.

Roth fails to create a new direction in the homosexuality controversy. First, he quotes biblical passages and concludes, "Nowhere does the Bible speak of homosexuality in a positive way." But Roth nowhere refers to Jesus Christ. What happened to the Christ orientation of Anabaptist biblical hermeneutics? Second, Roth acknowledges that "homosexual acts are not uniquely reprehensible sins." But he does not explain the mystery of why Mennonites are not attacking other "sins" as intensely as we are homosexuality. I guess that if North American Mennonites started scrutinizing our economic morality based on Christ's teaching, we would have to shun each other, and the church would be empty. Third, it is inappropriate to compare homosexuality with incest. We do not accept incest not because the Bible says so but because human beings know that it causes serious biological outcomes. That is why even in non-Christian society, people largely regard incest as taboo.—*Shuji Moriichi, Stanchfield, Minn.*

My chief reaction to Roth's explication on homosexuality was one of surprise. Surprise that *The Mennonite* would choose to devote so much of its limited space to one person's defense of conference doctrine. Surprise that the person chosen would be Roth, a historian who cites neither the context nor the discussions of those who actually drafted and adopted the resolutions on human sexuality adopted at Purdue and Saskatoon.

And surprise, most of all, at the sort of history Roth seems to be practicing. What sort of claim is being advanced when he declares it "a bad idea" for the church to overturn a tradition of discrimination "in the space of 10 or 20 years"? Does Roth really believe that the desire of homosexual Christians for acceptance in the church is a function of the last two decades only? Or does his concern center on "the particular cultural mood" of this desire, at odds with "the grand sweep of Christian history"? By those criteria, an initiative like the Damascus Road program to combat institutional racism is a bad idea as well.—*Wynn M. Goering, Albuquerque, N.M.*

If I were a gay man, I would ask our Bible scholars to study the word "celibacy." If this is a gift, how can the church require a gay person to be celibate? Paul writes: "I wish that all were as I am. But each has a particular gift from God, one having one kind and another a different kind" (1 Corinthians 7:7). William Barclay comments: "Those who do not possess the gift [of celibacy] should marry. … It is folly for one to take a vow of celibacy unless he possesses the special gift and capacity."

If I were a gay man, I would ask our teachers to tell us about sexual orientation. If this is given to each person at birth and it is equally natural to be gay as straight, sexual desire would be the same in both, although varying in intensity with individuals. In 1 Corinthians 7:3, we read, "If they have a nature naturally passionate, let them marry." What is a gay man to do with his passions?

If I were a gay man I would ask heterosexual couples to read Genesis 1:28. Are you limiting your intercourse to making babies? Is this not what the Bible says? If you are not observing this biblical injunction but engaging in mutual pleasure, why may not gay and lesbian partners engage in mutual pleasure? —*Jacob T. Friesen, North Newton, Kan.*

Roth mentions in the discussion of sexual rights that "chastity is not only a human possibility but is recognized as a spiritual calling, at least for some people" (Jan. 26). Do we know that anyone in Scripture except perhaps Paul, Jesus and John the Baptist followed it? And why did the reformers Martin Luther and Menno Simons marry after leaving the priesthood?—*Larry Eby, Albany, Ore.*

Finding our way

I commend *The Mennonite* and Gerald J. Biesecker-Mast for the excellent article "The Radical Mission of Teaching and Thinking" (Feb. 2). It was the best treatise on the importance of Mennonite higher education I have seen. Inundated as we are with a Reformed view of Christianity in politics, TV and radio preaching and in many Christian colleges, this article pointed out anew the theological and practical necessity for our Mennonite colleges.

I would suggest that *The Mennonite* continue to give us articles that nurture us like this one instead of an overabundance of integration and homosexuality. The church will be served well by feeding it material that nurtures it in the Christian and Mennonite faith. When the church is strong in faith it will find its way through issues such as integration and homosexuality. But if the church reduces its thinking only to these issues or any other issue, it can soon lose the way.—*Paul M. Zehr, Lancaster, Pa.*

Rosa, Osijek Station

by Heather Smith

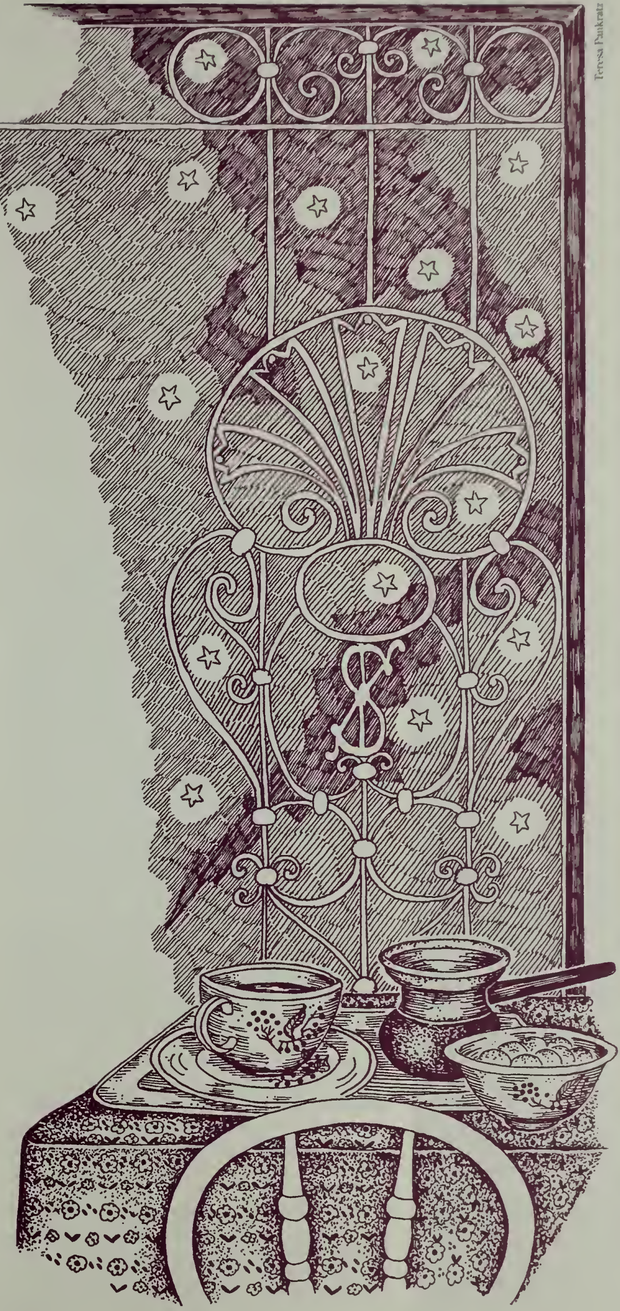
Then they told me to come to Osijek
to claim my son, but when I saw his look
I bent over sick in the room. He smiled
stiff & hysterical with one black eye
staring up at me & the other, gone.
If you could have seen him! He was my son.
There was a hole, here, dug into his throat.
Three sons! & all, this horror with the throat.
& my husband after 42 years,
who fought the Ustashe as a volunteer
in these forests in the 2nd World War,
shot in the head against the wall of our house!
That is when they took me to the seashore.
For three months I could not leave until now.

We had a beautiful old place in Mostar
with all the family there in summer
to work in the harvest. There was the smell
of sweet-grass dried & chopped in the full
heat of the noon sun & we hauled till dusk
stacking the hay while the girls husked corn.
Paprika hung from corners drying red
& bunched, the skins leathery & wrinkled.
The blackbirds screeched beneath the pear trees
& in the pumpkin patches. By evening
bats would slap out from the barn rafters
circling into the woods in fits & jerks
against the sky full of a million stars.
It is a long way now, so far, so far.

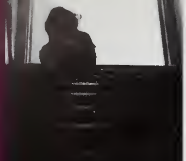
There was coffee cooking on the stove,
Marzipan sweet-balls in a china dish,
& then the sound of shells like heat-thunder,
& the wreck of bullets out of the grove.
We couldn't leave to milk the cows or hitch
the horses we left grazing. From the cellar
we ate black olives glistening in oil,
onions, butter beans, & overripe plums.
Weevils grew in the flour & the cream spoiled.
The Chetniks came on Friday & killed everyone,
except this one, dead in Osijek.
I have the 7:13 train going back.
Send me a letter from America.
Soon I'll be home again in Herzegovina.
Here is my temporary address:

Rosa
The hotel
The sea

Heather Smith lives in Kalona, Iowa. She worked in a refugee camp in Bosnia during the war there.



Teresa Pankratz



Membership:
Where are
we headed?

Membershi in Christ’

What does Jesus in the Gospels teach us about membership?

by John Zimmerman

My reading of the Gospels is that Jesus taught that to the extent we consider ourselves part of the redeemed people of God, it is untenable to exclude others on the basis of criteria we fail to live up to ourselves. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “The sword wherewith [the disciples] judge their brethren will fall upon their own heads.”

When Jesus walked the earth, he was part of a religious tradition in which influential factions attempted to draw boundaries between the righteous and the wicked. Jesus rejected that distinction—not on the grounds that those considered wicked were morally not so bad, but on the grounds that those who considered themselves righteous had also separated themselves from God by their involvement in sin.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus broadened the definition of sin to include everyone by defining as outside God’s will such things as anger, lust, divorce and remarriage, self-defense, fighting lawsuits, refusing to lend money, storing up treasures on earth and hostility toward those who mistreat us (Matthew 5–6). He made clear that sin goes deep into the hearts of each person.

In light of a definition of God’s will of which most everyone falls short, Jesus’ words late in that sermon follow naturally: “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make, you will be judged” (Matthew 7:1-2a).

Jesus made this point with greatest force in his parable of the two men who went up to the temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14). The point for Jesus was not who was free of a sinful lifestyle (no one was) but who cried out to God for mercy.

Essential to understanding the antagonism between Jesus and the Pharisees is seeing that the Pharisees were self-righteous in their attitude of moral superiority over others. For example, in the story of the notorious woman who entered the home of a Pharisee to wash Jesus’ feet, a central point is that in their blindness to their own need for divine mercy, the Pharisees missed out on what God wanted to offer all people through Jesus (Luke 7:36-50).

The Pharisees, like most of us, sought to define sin in a way that allowed them to consider themselves nonsinners while allowing them to regard others as sinners. This helps explain why the Pharisees taught a more moderate form of obedience to God than Jesus did. Thus, Jesus could seem stricter than the Pharisees (regarding, for example, wealth, divorce and remarriage, lust and anger) and at the same time offend most religious people with his acceptance of those who didn’t come close to meeting even common moral standards. The key to understanding this apparent contradiction is that, in the eyes of Jesus, all were sinners, while in the eyes of the Pharisees, some were and they themselves weren’t.

Efforts to establish a pure church through the exclusion of those deemed the sinners among us is inevitably based on defining sin more narrowly and less deeply than Jesus did. The goal in such an effort is to define the moral boundaries so that we are in and certain others are out. This is precisely the approach of the Pharisees, as depicted in the Gospels. The problem turns out to be not that we’re too rigid about sin but that we’re too loose about it.

It follows from the teachings of Jesus that if sinners aren’t part of the church, then no one’s left—except Jesus himself.

Jesus taught the inclusion of “the sinners” in the kingdom of God.

Jesus was renowned—notorious even—for opening his arms to sinners. The Gospels make clear that Jesus was heavily criticized for precisely this (e.g. Matthew 9:10-13, 11:16-19; Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-32, 7:39, 15:2, 19:7). The kingdom of God was the guiding image of Jesus’ message, and he made clear that the kingdom of God would include those regarded as “sinners.” As Jesus told the devout religious people of his day, “I tell you the truth, the tax collec-

> Efforts to establish a pure church through the exclusion of those deemed the sinners among us is inevitably based on defining sin more narrowly and less deeply than Jesus did.

tors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you" (Matthew 21:31b).

Still, the argument can be made that Jesus was simply calling these folks to change their lives and he would only accept them once they left their sin and began to live righteously. This view is based on a polemic caricature of first-century Judaism and a desire to avoid the true offensiveness of Jesus' behavior.

After surveying first-century rabbinical writings in his book *Jesus and Judaism* (Fortress, 1985), scholar E.P. Sanders makes the case that such an approach would not have been controversial to anyone. He writes: "No one would have been offended if Jesus had converted quislings [e.g., tax collectors] … and other 'sinners.' … Those who were zealous for the law, such as the Pharisees, would have rejoiced. The notion that the conversion of sinners was offensive to the Pharisees is, when thought about concretely, ridiculous."

There is overwhelming historical evidence that Jesus accepted into his group people seen by pious religious folk as among the worst sinners around. Jesus did not dispute their description of his friends, but he implied that those who rejected him were not so pure themselves.

Jesus saw himself as bearing people's sins on the cross.

Jesus seems to have seen himself as the bearer of people's sins on the cross—a self-understanding closely connected to the suffering servant of Isaiah 52 and 53. This bears on the question of membership this way: If Jesus bore people's sins on the cross, then what persuasive reason is there to exclude people from his church because of their sin? Is the suffering of God in Christ on the cross not sufficient to reconcile sinners to God?

The portrayal of Jesus as the suffering servant carries through from the beginning of the Gospel narratives to their culmination in his suffering and death? It influences the descriptions of his birth (Matthew 1:21), his baptism (John 1:29) and his teachings (e.g., Mark 10:45). Especially strong historical evidence comes from those passages that describe Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah (Matthew 16:13-23 and parallels). In those passages, four things happen: Peter states his belief that Jesus is the Messiah; Jesus then predicts his suffering and death; Peter responds by rebuking Jesus for saying this; and Jesus says to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan!" It is difficult to imagine the early church making up an incident in which Peter, a revered leader in the church, would be called "Satan" by Jesus. Jesus saw his death as central to his mission.

The accounts of Jesus' last supper with his disciples, as found in the Synoptic Gospels, show that the early church put great importance on retaining Jesus' words from the occasion. In spite of the variations in language in the different accounts (suggesting that they were passed on independently), they are united in recording Jesus saying that his death was for others (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20).

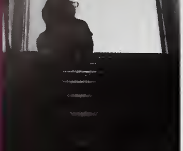
On the cross we see the identification of Jesus with sinners—and of the Messiah with the suffering servant. Dying a criminal's death, between two condemned thieves, immediately after the Passover, with a sign above his head saying, "King of the Jews," Jesus breathed his last and said, "It is finished." The reconciliation between God and humanity had been accomplished through the vicarious suffering of the one who was both God and human. Was this not sufficient to reconcile sinners to God?

The Bible cannot with integrity be made to say that Jesus taught that only some people were sinners while others were not. And the Bible cannot be made to deny that Jesus' opponents criticized him for his persistent acceptance of sinners who had not repented to their satisfaction. And the Bible cannot be made to deny that, throughout their works, the Gospel writers interpret Jesus' coming death as a death for the sins of others along the lines of the suffering servant of Isaiah 52 and 53.

If we base our understanding of church membership on the teachings and actions of Jesus, I don't think we have any choice but to welcome in Christ's name all who are willing to accept his mercy into a church that considers itself a fellowship of forgiven sinners reconciled to God through the suffering of our Lord.

John Zimmerman is pastor at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church. His article is distilled from a longer presentation to a meeting of representatives from Rocky Mountain, South Central and Western District conferences in October 1998.

On the cross we see the identification of Jesus with sinners—and of the Messiah with the suffering servant.



Membership: Where are we headed?

Stand o
not codes of conduc

What defines us as Mennonites?—part 1

by R. Brent Alderfer and Vern Rempel

As anger on both sides of issues like homosexuality, abortion and others further divides those in the secular community, we are more and more saddened by our willingness to secularize the Mennonite church along the same lines.

How can it be that our most passionate discussion of what it means to be Mennonite turns on conduct codes and membership criteria? The same rallying cry that now ignites political campaigns, realigns social groups and engenders criminal attacks now seeks to define us as Mennonites. The fact that social, political and church agenda are converging should warn us that we may be joining the wrong crowd, especially given our legacy of suffering under that combination.

The core of what we value about being Mennonite is much deeper than conduct codes and criteria. We are drawn to each other, our families and our faith by something more profound. We are drawn by what may be difficult to describe, by what we experience and share: A communion of Christlike spirit in life that doesn't exist in what we do or have. It comes from a life led by the Spirit. It sets us apart because we look to a different place to make our choices. Even when a life led by Christ's spirit appears to others as deprivation, we know the deeper peace of relationships, family and community based on love and service.

> **That we will follow the Holy Spirit's leading in our lives no matter where it takes us is a stand. That we not associate with certain types of sinners is a code.**

What is more difficult to see, especially in the heat of moral argument, is that we are trading the mysterious immortal core of Mennonite faith for more certainty in temporal standards, standards more publicly and politically understandable in the world. Will those standards preserve the core of what makes us Mennonite? We think not. And we suspect the real anxiety over standards in the church comes from the creeping realization that we can't have both.

We now point to homosexuality, divorce and other selected sins as destroying "the fabric of society." First our politicians and now our preachers offer this phrase as our call to arms. General moral decline requires firm response from both the law and the church, or at least that is what we are telling each other. It's the same refrain that is bringing success to newly emerged suburban megachurches across the country. But for Mennonites, is this about saving the fabric of society, or is it about finely and finally weaving ourselves into that fabric?

Peace, joy and wholeness: For centuries Mennonites stood apart from the world with a rock solid faith that a life led by the Holy Spirit brings peace, joy and wholeness in this life and the next. The history is inspiring: A merchant standing with his wares in the marketplace refused to kneel for the local clergy passing through with Communion, and he was burned at the stake the next day. An exiled housewife, inspired like many Anabaptists to believe that the earth is the Lord's, returned to her home village and was burned to death—burned with her mouth full of gunpowder so she could offer no witness as she died. The record says her fellow Anabaptist truth seekers marveled at her obstinacy and faith.

In that tradition we have defined ourselves by our stands, not by our code. That we won't take another life, no matter how despicable the soul, is a Spirit-informed stand. That we will kill only for just cause is a moral and legal

promises

code. That we will follow the Holy Spirit's leading in our lives no matter where it takes us is a stand. That we not associate with certain types of sinners is a code.

Codes of conduct, like all laws, are a poor second choice to a discerning spirit. They also have a poor track record in preserving morality. Lawyers have the most highly developed ethical code of any profession, complete with disciplinary rules and disbarment, but lawyers get no credit for being ethical. Mennonite codes haven't fared much better. From plain coats to coverings to no TV, we've strictly enforced them, then abandoned them over time.

But living out of a faith stand rather than a code does not serve us well when we join the material world. For one thing it is not popular because it threatens that way of life. For another, there are no clear answers, so it is a continual search for the truth. The early Anabaptists were called truth seekers. It actually may be impossible to know for sure in any given moment whether we are standing on the promises of Christ or jumping again to the irresistible ground of our own wants and fears. And what's worse, the outside world will crucify, in opinion, pressure and law, anyone who attempts the Spirit-led journey. A pacifist and a conspirator might both refuse to kill a terrorist, and the world disdains them equally.

It is no coincidence that our return to moral standards comes at the same time we join completely the material world, eliminating the last pretense of separation from it. Our careers, families, finances, time, vacations, recreation, entertainment, conversations, goals and aspirations are now for the most part indistinguishable from any other successful Christian church. We no longer have to be embarrassed by our differences from our neighbors. And we now join the world in excluding the unacceptable sins and working to save the fabric of society.

Give to the poor and follow Jesus: So is preservation of the social fabric the foundation of the newly merged Mennonite Church? As charges of moral relativism fly, and our brothers and sisters of the past are excommunicated from the future, the righteous among us need to remember that for those that keep all the commandments, the next step is to give what we have to the poor and follow Jesus. That made the rich young ruler sad, and it will make us sad, too.

We may have a different list of who's in and who's out of the Mennonite church if as much sermon time were devoted to accepting human sexuality, good and bad, as has been given to explaining how God can get a camel through the eye of a needle. Then maybe everyone who earns or keeps income or wealth in excess of basic life needs would need to find a different church or shop conferences for acceptability.

It is time to go back to uncovering the core of the Mennonite church, not defining its rules of membership. What are the stands and commitments that create the mysterious spirit of community that we have, what the world can't create? What are the practices of worship, confrontation and discipline that foster its growth against overwhelming odds? What is the Mennonite legacy that stands on the promises of Christ, the only legacy worth pursuing?

It is time to go back to uncovering the core of the Mennonite church, not defining its rules of membership.

R. Brent Alderfer is a member and Vern Rempel is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Denver. This is the first of a two-part article.

New youth convention coordinator wants to offer Christian advantage

Francisco

HAMPTON, Va.—Steven Francisco's ministry is the result of growing up in a family with a drug problem.

"My father drug us to Sunday school, he drug us to church, he drug us to conferences, to revivals," says Francisco with a laugh.

The late Leslie Francisco II, a Mennonite pastor from the Newport News-Hampton area of Virginia, provided the type of environment for his children to become believers. Now that's what Francisco, a member of the pastoral team at Calvary Community Church in Hampton, wants to do for youth in the integrating church.

"I grew up having every advantage ... to be Christian," he says. "I see youth today pretty much left to make up their own minds."

Francisco, 39, has been named Mennonite Youth Convention coordinator, succeeding Carlos Romero, who has directed the past four youth conventions. Francisco will join Romero for this summer's convention in St. Louis, July 23-27, after which Romero will step down to become vice president of student services at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Francisco is inheriting a program that has become wildly successful. Under Romero, the youth convention has grown from 1,800 participants in 1991 to 5,200 in 1997. Six thousand youth and sponsors are expected at St. Louis.

While changes are always possible, Francisco says, he doesn't anticipate any major revamping. And he wants to continue the high-energy, spirited worship that has come to characterize the youth convention.

"I kind of thought of Carlos as the Michael Jordan of youth conventions," Francisco says. "I wonder if there are any new moves to try."

Says Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, "While it is always difficult to lose such a gifted administrator, we believe Steven has the spiritual gifts needed to lead youth conventions during this next era."

Francisco's involvement in youth minstry started as a sponsor of Calvary's Mennonite Youth Fellowship. After he joined the pastoral team at Calvary in 1985, he served for awhile as youth pastor. While he no longer holds those responsibilities, Francisco still is connected. He recently created a council at Calvary to coordinate the congregation's variety of youth ministries, including drama, singing, Boy Scouts and Sunday school.

Among Francisco's churchwide activities have been chairing the Virginia Conference Warwick District Council, representing the Mennonite Church on the Interim Ministry Leadership Committee and serving a special assignment with the African-American Mennonite Association.—*Rich Preheim*

It's in the mail

Registration materials have been mailed for all ages to attend St. Louis 99, the joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, to be held July 23-27. Materials were sent to all GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada congregations.

The housing option of dorm rooms at the University of Missouri-St. Louis is no longer available for convention participants. St. Louis 99 planners are seeking alternative campus housing. —*GCMC and MC news services*

Young adults to get St. Louis emphasis

NEWTON, Kan.—Organizers of this summer's joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in St. Louis are giving more attention to young adults than ever before.

"We want young adults to have a place of priority in the church, and we hope this will help establish that place," says Jill Landis, a student at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and co-coordinator of the St. Louis 99 Young Adult Convention. "We want to make it a place where young adults can come together and dialogue and find others in the church."

A block of rooms in one of the downtown hotels has been reserved for young adults, and a young adult lounge will be part of the convention facilities. There are several young adult events planned in addition to three worship services.

Organizers also hope to offer scholarship money to enable young adults to attend. A newsletter publicizing young adult events has been sent to every Mennonite congregation and college. "We're working more intentionally to get young adults to convention," says convention staff member Ken Hawkley.

Convention staff members plus four young adults from the United States and Canada have been meeting every six weeks by conference call to plan for the convention.
—*GCMC and MC news services*

MCC photo by Jim King

Cauliflower power

Shanoli (right), a Bangladeshi farmer, examines a cauliflower patch with an agricultural extensionist. As part of its $500,000 response to last summer's devastating floods, Mennonite Central Committee introduced cauliflower to help farmers grow their own food. Previously an exotic vegetable found only in the cities, cauliflower is now flourishing, even allowing farmers extra to sell. MCC is also providing wheat and plans to help rebuild houses.

Goshen highest among Mennonite colleges in national study of doctoral recipients

The four U.S. Mennonite four-year colleges rank in the top half of all schools in their class, according to a national survey of where doctorate recipients earned their bachelor's degrees.

Compared to about 550 other private liberal arts colleges, Goshen (Ind.) College graduates earned 539 doctorates between 1920 and 1995, the 81st highest number in the survey, released last year by Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., was 158th during that time with 298 graduates earning doctorates. Bluffton (Ohio) College was 212th with 197, and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., was 223rd with 185.

The survey, however, does not take into account the number of each school's graduates during the period surveyed. College enrollments in the private liberal arts category range from several hundred to several thousand. The study also does not include medical, law and other professional, nondoctoral degrees awarded to bachelor-degree recipients.

The survey also tracked doctorate recipients by fields of study, placing them into 12 science categories and six nonscience categories. Goshen graduates were almost evenly split between doctorates in the sciences (272) and nonsciences (267). Bethel graduates leaned more toward the sciences, 160 to 138, while Bluffton students favored the nonsciences 112 to 85. EMU students preferred nonsciences to sciences 97 to 88.

Among the fields of study under the sciences category were life sciences, physics and astronomy, chemistry, engineering, pyschology, economics, political science and anthropology. Nonsciences included English, foreign languages, history, other humanities and education.

In the last 10 years of the study, 1986 to 1995, 137 Goshen graduates earned doctorates for 75th place in the rankings. Bethel was 169th with 66, and EMU was 184th with 61. Bluffton, with 32, did not make the top half of the list.

During that 10-year span, 73 Goshen graduates got their doctorates in the sciences, compared to 64 students in the nonsciences. Bethel graduates received 36 science and 30 nonscience doctorates. Bluffton graduates were 19 nonscience and 13 science, and EMU graduates were 33 nonscience and 28 science.

In 1995, 15 Goshen graduates were awarded doctorates, seven from Bethel, three from Bluffton and six from EMU.

Oberlin (Ohio) College was by far the private liberal arts school with the most students going on to earn doctorates: 4,400 from 1920 to 1995, including 959 from 1986 to 1995. Second place schools were Swarthmore (Pa.) College with 2,529 from 1920 to 1995 and Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., with 638 from 1986 to 1995.—*Rich Preheim*

At 103, he may be oldest minister

B.H. Janzen didn't want a lot of fuss over his birthday this year.

"I appreciate it and don't want to put a damper on things, but I don't want a big party this year," he said. "I feel sorrow for people who have a birthday and no one recognizes it. In God's sight, everyone is as important as I."

But not everyone has celebrated a 103rd birthday, as Janzen did Jan. 25. A North Newton, Kan., resident, he may be the oldest living ordained Mennonite minister.

During his 58-year career, Janzen pastored seven congregations in Oklahoma, Oregon, Kansas and Nebraska, plus served as field secretary for the Western District Conference and worked with the Old Colony Mennonites of Mexico.

Janzen retired in 1974 after eight years as pastor of Bethel Mennonite Church, Hydro, Okla.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Old beliefs are new lessons for walkers

Middle East visitors get introduction to peace theology

ISTANBUL, Turkey—To Cherese Mowers, it was all new: pacifism, persecution and Constantine.

Alan Kreider, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in London, recently spent three days in Istanbul teaching Mowers and 41 other people basic peace theology. He described the early church's emphases on peace and community, the resulting persecution and Emperor Constantine's legalization of Christianity in 312 and the subsequent de-emphasis on peace.

"Why have I never learned in my church that Jesus taught peace and that the loss of this message came from Constantine's making Christianity popular?" Mowers asked.

Mowers, from Dallas, and the rest of Kreider's audience were participants in the Reconciliation Walk, a grass-roots effort of Western Christians visiting the Middle East to apologize for the misuse of the name and message of Jesus in the Crusades.

In little more than a year, Kreider has introduced more than 100 Reconciliation Walk participants—Christians from 10 countries—to basic, biblical Anabaptist theology.

"If we believe as Anabaptists that we have a right understanding of the message of Jesus, then it is incumbent upon us to share that with others," says Kreider, director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at Regent's Park College, Oxford University, in Oxford, England. "I don't look at this as necessarily Anabaptist theology. I look at it as biblical theology, which properly conveys an understanding of the teachings of Jesus. And I believe we should take this message and allow it to transform our ideas of what church can and perhaps should be."

The Reconciliation Walk participants who have heard Kreider come from a variety of Christian traditions. And many of them have not heard of a Jesus-centered church committed to peace. While not all participants come away with a changed perspective, many do ask questions that had previously never entered their minds.

"The Christian church embraced imperialism more than 1,600 years ago," Kreider says. "There has always been a faithful remnant present throughout all of this time, but it never gained much popularity in the mainstream of the faith. It will take many people making small, slow changes over a long period of time before we are able to find ourselves back in the tradition of the early church. What is truly exciting is that we are able to start today."
—*Christy Risser for MBM New Service*

Baker

Builder columnist concludes race

For 34 years, Bob Baker has assisted readers of *Builder* through his weekly column, "If I Were Teaching the Lesson."

That assistance comes to an end with the magazine's Feb. 28 lesson as Baker concludes his run in *Builder.*

"It's been a good race; I have tried to keep the faith," Baker writes in his last column. "Forgive me of my mistakes; praise God if this page of the *Builder* has helped you to teach his glorious Word, the Bible."

Baker, a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., is a retired public school biology teacher. He will continue writing his "County Road 13" column for *Christian Living.*

MVS adopts unit in Americus, Ga.

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) is welcoming a new member to its family—and this one came by adoption.

MVS has assumed most of the administrative responsibilities for the voluntary service unit in Americus, Ga. The unit was previously part of Eastern Mennonite Missions' Voluntary Service program, which was closed at the end of 1997. The unit is sponsored by Americus Mennonite Fellowship.

"This unit has been functioning on its own but wanted to be part of the larger MVS structure," says MVS director Miles Reimer.

MVS will provide the Americus unit with most administrative services and benefits. But MVS staff will not recruit for the Americus unit.

"Four or five of our 30 exisiting units are not up to their quota of volunteers," Reimer says. "We won't recruit for a new unit as long as that's the case."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Food to go

Richard Clark of Harrisburg, Pa., stops for hot chocolate and a cookie from Ellen Dyer. Dyer, also from Harrisburg, was one of 16 adults who participated in "Taste and See" Jan. 29-31. The event was a condensed training of Eastern Mennonite Missions' Youth Evangelism Service. YES trainings usually last three months.

MCC starts three-year, $4.7 million response to Hurricane Mitch in Central America

AKRON, Pa.—At first, things looked the same to Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager.

"It had been a year and a half since I had been in Honduras, and now I was returning to the country I had grown to love," says Yoder-Bontrager, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, from 1993 to 1997. "You didn't have to go very far before seeing people on the side of the road looking for any place to live. You didn't have to go far before realizing something was terribly wrong."

What was wrong was the devastation left by Hurricane Mitch in September 1998—the worst hurricane to hit Central America in more than a century. Yoder-Bontrager recently returned to Honduras to assist MCC relief efforts. The storm destroyed much of Honduras' and Nicaragua's infrastructures and took thousands of lives. As many as 2 million people may have lost their homes to the flooding and mud slides that followed the hurricane.

Now, MCC workers are putting in overtime to help recovery efforts in Mitch's wake. Focusing on meeting housing and food needs and providing trauma counseling, MCC has started a long-term reconstruction initiative, estimated to last at least three years at a cost of $4.7 million. That's the amount of money the agency received from donors following Mitch.

In addition, MCC has sent more than $3 million in material aid, such as medicine, health and hygiene products, and food. MCC has also received more than 50,000 hurricane relief buckets contributed by North Americans.

"Our goal is to use material aid and cash resources to provide for immediate needs and foster long-term development," says Jim Hershberger, who is coordinating MCC's hurricane relief efforts. "Our partners in Honduras and El Salvador are emphasizing housing reconstruction, while in Nicaragua the emphasis is on food needs, agricultural production and environmental concerns. In Guatemala, MCC is working to establish health-care clinics as well as providing long-term housing."

MCC will spend $1.45 million to rebuild 1,600 homes in three years in Honduras plus another 100 homes in El Salvador.

Hershberger said ensuring food security is also a top priority. That includes supplying seeds and agricultural equipment and constructing irrigation systems. MCC plans to finance nearly $1 million in agriculture-related recuperation over the next three years.

In order to assist its Central American partners with the emotional and spiritual strain of relief and reconstruction efforts, MCC will provide resources for pastoral assistance and trauma counseling. In addition, MCC workers and associates from Guatemala will host trauma counseling with partners and victims affected by grieving. Such work will cost about $36,000.

"It will take years for the people of Honduras and their neighbors in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala to recover from this terrible storm," Yoder-Bontrager says. "But they will. They have a spirit more powerful than the storm."—*John M. Spidaliere of MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Marlisa Yoder-Bontrager

A family receives a Mennonite Central Committee hurricane relief bucket in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Seventy-eight buckets were distributed in a city school that was turned into a makeshift shelter for people displaced by flooding caused by Hurricane Mitch. North Americans contributed more than 50,000 buckets to MCC for distribution in Central America.

Correction: The Conference of Mennonites in Canada is one of the sponsoring agencies of Second Mile, a new peace program. CMC was omitted from a "New Congregational Peace Initiative Calls for Churches to Go Second Mile" in the Feb. 2 issue.

Corn bound for Honduras, not North Korea

AKRON, Pa.—After an 11th-hour decision, 40,000 bushels of corn donated by U.S. farmers are on their way to Honduras, not North Korea as originally planned.

Mennonite Central Committee last fall conducted its first corn drive in five years to benefit North Koreans suffering due to a food shortage in that country. But facing a month-long delay in shipping and the expiration of their shipping license, MCC administrators were concerned about the corn spoiling. So they decided to send the grain to Hurricane Mitch victims in Honduras—a much shorter journey than to North Korea.

MCC will keep its commitment to North Korea by purchasing $100,000 worth of beans—a one-month supply—for nursery children in three provinces.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

The earliest Mennonite-Catholic dialogue in North America was in late 19th-century Ontario between neighbors Peter Litwiller, an Amish bishop, and Eugene Funcken, a Catholic priest, who became friends and held informal dialogues. —*Mennonite Quarterly Review*

Homosexuality dialogue to continue in Alberta

CALGARY—Before the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta makes a decision about South Calgary Mennonite Church's conference status, the congregation has another year to dialogue with other conference members regarding its position on homosexuality.

South Calgary in 1997 declared itself a member of the Supportive Congregations Network (SCN), welcoming noncelibate homosexuals.

The resolution passed by the conference's General Council calls on member congregations and conference leadership to "do an in-depth study of what it means to be 'People of God' as we enter the 21st century." At the same time, South Calgary is urged to explain its rationale for joining SCN. The issue will be revisited at the conference's annual sessions in 2000.

Meanwhile, the other two conferences of which South Calgary is a member—Northwest Conference and the Mennonite Brethren—have instructed the congregation to repent of its position or leave by the end of June. —*Canadian Mennonite*

CPT program participants' Hebron home razed

HEBRON, West Bank—Israeli authorities on Feb. 4 destroyed the Hebron home of Fayez and Huba Jabber, who are paired with a Newton, Kan., congregation through Christian Peacemaker Teams' Campiagn for Secure Dwellings. The Jabbers are at least the third West Bank family in the CPT program to have their home destroyed.

The Jabber family is matched with Shalom Mennonite Church, which is planning a response to the incident, including sending money for a new home. The Campaign for Secure Dwellings links Palestinian families with North Americans for support and advocacy.

Youth work thrives in Congo despite challenges

STRASBOURG, France—Civil and political unres thave made for difficult times, says the president of the national youth convention of the Mennonite Church in Congo.

"We survive only by God's grace in a precarious situation," Kilembe Mabaya Shista recently told a gathering of Mennonite World Conference leaders.

But in spite of the obstacles, he says, the Youth for Christ-Mennonite movement in Congo is working creatively and actively. The Mennonite young people have made evangelism a priority, setting aside Wednesdays and Saturdays for the task. Members also do home visitation, sing in choirs, compose songs and participate in seminars.

"No matter what the circumstances, the young people are always present and active at all church functions," Shista says.—*MWC News Service*

AMBS Pastors' Week draws 188 participants

ELKHART, Ind.—One hundred eighty-eight people faced their fears—from the future of the church to how power is used—during Pastors' Week Jan. 25-28 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart.

The two primary presenters were Leonard Sweet, a United Methodist pastor, historian and futurist, and Anne Stuckey, minister of congregational leadership for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. Sweet addressed changes in technology and media for ministry, while Stuckey focused on fears such as use and abuse of power, anger and lawsuits.

Workshops covered topics such as finding a next pastorate, humor and health, and failing marriages.

Drought-plagued Brazil gets MCC assistance

TACAIMBO, Brazil—As the northeastern Brazilian state of Pernambuco enters its third year of drought, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is continuing to help sustain life in the region, one of the poorest in the country.

MCC is providing 16 tankloads of water a week in Tacaimbo, to be distributed at 25 cisterns throughout the area. The cisterns were built with MCC assistance in the late 1980s. MCC is also planning to dig six wells in the coming months, which will cost $8,400.

In addition, two metric tons of corn seed and beans will be sent to Tacaimbo, while another 2 1/2 metric tons of beans and 1,200 kilograms of corn seed will to go to start a seed bank.—*MCC News Service*

Choice Books sets sales record in 1998

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Choice Books sold a record 2.38 million books in 1998, the 13th consecutive year of sales growth.

Choice Books, once an outreach of Mennonite Board of Missions, is owned and operated by seven regional distributors. More than 4,000 book displays are maintained in airports, stores and military bases across the country.

Events

Mennonite Central Committee Central States annual meeting, Feb. 28, Memorial Road Mennonite Brethren Church, Oklahoma City. Theme: "Faces of a Caring Christ."

"Hospitality and the Vital Church" workshop, March 6, Harrisonburg, Va. Contact: Marilyn Miller, 303-499-1565, or Ed Bontrager, 757-595-6889.

"Churches That Work: The Missional Church in a World of Need" conference, March 11-13, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. Sponsored by the John Coffman Center for Church Planting and Evangelism, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Board of Missions, Virginia Mennonite Conference and New Life Ministries. Contact: Linford L. Stutzman, 540-432-4206 or stutzmal@emu.edu.

"Pluralism and Community: Conversations on the Calling and Character of Anabaptist-Mennonites for Beginning the 21st Century" conference, March 24-26, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa. Contact: info@laurelville.org or 800-839-1021.

The Giving Project Gathering, April 9-10, First Mennonite Church, Denver. Contact: GivingProject@Prodigy.net or 888-406-9773.

The Giving Project Gathering, April 16-17, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. Contact: 888-406-9773 or GivingProject@Prodigy.net.

Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., 25th anniversary celebration, April 17-18. Contact: assemblymenn@juno.com or 219-534-4190.

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Workers

Bartel, Floyd, has retired as associate conference minister for Western District Conference.

Dow, Lenard, Philadelphia, is beginning a five-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Philadelphia as a program coordinator.

Flickinger, Deanne, Newton, Kan., is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in Nicaragua as a community service worker.

Iverson, Mike and Shari, Evanston, Ill., are beginning two and a half-year assignments with MCC in Whitesburg, Ky., Mike as a community service worker and Shari as an administrative assistant.

Kanagy, Curtiss L., has concluded a pastorate at East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Kern, Marilyn, has concluded a pastorate at Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Lantz, Mervin, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as a processing supervisor for Ten Thousand Villages.

Michaels, Paul, has begun a pastorate at East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Miller, Jon and Wendy, Atwater, Ohio, are beginning three-year MCC assignments in Uganda, Jon in community development and Wendy in agricultural education.

Peterson, Carol and Ken, are beginning pastorates at Dover (Ohio) Christian Fellowship.

Rheinheimer, Jan, was ordained Jan. 10 as co-pastor at Mountain Community Mennonite Church, Palmer Lake, Colo.

Schrag, Barbara, Freeman, S.D., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Freeman as MCC Central States Northern Tier regional associate.

Shank, Michael, Apple Creek, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Seattle as a staff person for the Puget Sound Alliance.

Thieszen, Sara, Henderson, Neb., is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in Washington, D.C., as activity and office support staff.

Wenger, Michael, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as a stock coordinator for Ten Thousand Villages.

Zaes, Elizabeth, has begun a pastorate at Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif.

Births

Boehm, Jonah William, Jan. 8, to Ray Boehm and Twila Lebold, Waterloo, Ont.

Christner, Emily Marie, Jan. 28, to Renee (Helmkamp) and Tim Christner, Shipshewana, Ind.

Cowles, Caleb Norris, Jan. 30, to John and Pam (Koch) Cowles, Pulaski, Iowa.

Ewert, August Nikolai Rempel, Dec. 26, to Angela and Bret Rempel Ewert, Cartwright, Labrador.

Geiser, Elizabeth Grace, Jan. 5, to Karen (Gerber) and Olin Geiser, Orrville, Ohio.

Hershberger, Noah Andrew, Jan. 24, to Joe and Marjorie (Coblentz) Hershberger, Hartville, Ohio.

Hochstetler, Abigail Rose, Dec. 30, to Jerry and Linda (Childress) Hochstetler, Mishawaka, Ind.

LaLoge, Alexis Lynn, Jan. 25, to Bethany (Reed) and Sterling LaLoge, Lamar, Colo.

Martin, Olivia Grace, Jan. 5, to Jerry and Mary (Stouffer) Martin, Lancaster, Pa.

Miller, Olivia Joy, Jan. 26, to Brent and Marcy (Swartzendruber) Miller, Staten Island, N. Y.

Murray, Meghana Joy, born April 20, 1997, received for adoption Dec. 17, 1998, to John and Krista (Miller) Murray, Topeka, Ind.

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Reschly, Reese Thomas, Jan. 27, to Jackie (Bontreger) and Tom Reschly, Goshen, Ind.

Rush, Leah JoAnne, Dec. 17, to Debra and Marc Rush, Quakertown, Pa.

Schlabach, Collin Reed, Jan. 12, to Lawrence and Ruth (Schrock) Schlabach, Iowa City, Iowa.

Stuckey, Madison Jo, Jan. 18, to Barb (Roth) and Phil Stuckey, Archbold, Ohio.

Walkup, Kimberly Jo, Jan. 14, to Ben and Renee (Roth) Walkup, Stryker, Ohio.

Yeakey, Hannah Marie Nofziger, Jan. 25, to Kathleen (Nofziger) and Michael Yeakey, Cheraw, Colo.

Correction: In the Feb. 2 births, Micah Angel Miller was born July 28, 1997, received for adoption Dec. 18, 1998.

Marriages

Flaming/Grant: Bill Flaming, Inman, Kan., and Amy Grant, McPherson, Kan., Jan. 30 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Springer/Tovey: Fannie Springer, Archbold, Ohio, and Paul Tovey, Archbold, Jan. 16 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Deaths

Boshart, Ferne Weller, 93, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Walter Boshart. Parents: John and Eva Gertrude Pinkerton Weller (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Jean Stucky, James, Richard; seven stepgrandchildren; nine stepgreatgrandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Goshen, Ind.

Brubaker, Esther Oberholtzer, 82, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 5. Spouse: Aaron Brubaker. Parents: Elmer and Alta Oberholtzer (deceased). Other survivors: children Mark, Glen, Fred, Lynn, Jere, Omer, Alta, Dean, Deb, Deana Erdman; 18 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Eisenhour, Jay, 53, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 30 of a stroke. Spouse: Sue Yoder Eisenhour. Parents: Roy and Grace Miller Eisenhour. Other survivors: children Jed, Tex, Sid; one grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Franz, Harold, 81, Wichita, Kan., died Jan. 20. Spouse: LaVona Franz. Parents: Henry and Anna Ewert Franz (deceased). Other survivors: children Dennis, Diane Genova; stepchildren Gary, Carol Hill, Linda King, Sherry Unruh; two grandchildren; eight stepgrandchildren; one step-great-grandchild. Memorial service: Jan. 23 at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, and Feb. 6 at Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash.

Grieser, Jennie Henschen, 57, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 14 of cancer. Spouse: Ralph Grieser. Parent: Esther Henschen. Other survivors: children Ann Marie Olmstead, Todd; two grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Groff, Anna Mae, 73, Ephrata, Pa., died Feb. 1. Parents: Henry and Ella Stoner Groff (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 5 at Ephrata (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hjelmstad, Harold Kenneth, 81, Golden, Colo., died Jan. 31 of a heart attack. Spouse: Doris Shenk Hjelmstad. Parents: John and Mary Hjelmstad (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Hostetler, Sharon Marner, Ken, Rick; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Crown Hill Chapel, Lakewood, Colo.

Hunsberger, William, 94, East Pikeland Township, Pa., died Feb. 1 of pneumonia. Spouse: Waneta Shenk Hunsberger. Parents: Martin and Emma Jane Jones Hunsberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Ray, Phillip, June Nafziger, Jane; 12 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa.

Jantzi, Eunice Zehr, 58, Beaver Falls, N. Y., died Feb. 2 of cancer. Parents: Christian and Martha Moser Zehr (deceased). Survivors: children Todd, Kara McIntosh, Anne Maria; one grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 6 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, N. Y.

Knechtel, Matthew, 9, Bloomingdale, Ont., died Dec. 11 of congenital heart condition. Parents: Wayne and Cathy Knechtel. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Breslau (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Mininger, Emma Florence, 83, Quakertown, Pa., died Dec. 2. Spouse: Raymond Mininger. Parents: Samuel and Anna Overholt Trauger (deceased). Other survivors: children Marion Mae Clymer, Stanley, Ruth Mindler, David; 10 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Neuhouser, Lorraine, 80, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Jan. 3 of a stroke. Funeral: Jan. 7 at Churubusco, Ind.

Ramseyer, Charles, 74, Pulaski, Iowa, died Dec. 31 of pulmonary fibrosis. Spouse: Lois Ramseyer. Parents: Sam and Maude Hartzler Ramseyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Dennis, Paul; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Pulaski (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Roulet, Samuel, 72, Bloomfield, Iowa, died Dec. 14 of heart and kidney failure. Spouse: Mildred. Parents: Sam and Fannie Roulet (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Keith; two grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 17 at Bloomfield, Iowa.

Weaver, Esther Mae Burkholder, 88, Ephrata, Pa., died Dec. 4 of an aneurysm. Spouse: Titus Weaver (deceased). Parents: Frank and Minnie Burkholder (deceased). Survivors: children Arlene Stauffer, Robert, Evelyn Witmer, Pauline Boll, Romaine Huber, Joyce Mummau; 24 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Hess Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa.

Weaver, Ralph, 73, Boswell, Pa., died Jan. 28 of a rare blood disorder. Spouse: Grace Shaffer. Parents: Benjamin and Rebecca Miller Weaver (deceased). Other survivor: son Russell. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Weber, Oliver, 84, Kitchener, Ont., died Dec. 18. Spouse: Almeda Snyder Weber. Parents: Allen and Sarah Weber (deceased). Other survivors: children Ken, Ross, Edward, Paul, Ralph. Funeral: Dec. 21 at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Wyse, Nellie Schmucker, 74, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 19. Spouse: Warren Wyse. Parents: Myron and Herma Schmucker (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerry, Ronald, Kenneth, Sandra Miller, Cynthia Preston; 15 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Yoder, Elda Kaufman, 93, Hollsopple, Pa., died Dec. 4. Spouse: Ammon Yoder (deceased). Parents: Noah and Malinda Kinsinger Kaufman (deceased). Survivors: children Noah, Dorothy Shetler, Twilla Thomas, Paul, Bernice Alwine, Emma Mae Alwine, Marlin, Erma Kauffman, Merle; 31 grandchildren; 51 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple.

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- **Menno Haven Camp** and Retreat Center, located in central Illinois, seeks an ***executive director***. For a job description, contact Doug Roth, 309-263-8933, or Wanda Bouwman, 630-427-1317.

- **Mennonite/Amish heritage tour** directed by Peter Wiebe and Vi Unruh, May 25-June 8, 1999. Leaving from Yoder, Kan., and stopping in Missouri, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Ontario, Pennsylvania and Washington DC. Cost $1,097. Call 800-364-2320.

- **Hope Mennonite Church**, Wichita, Kan., seeks a half-time ***director of ministry development***. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Search Committee, 868 N. Maize Road, Wichita, KS 67212; 316-722-0903; fax 316-722-5173.

- **Wilderness Wind Camp**, Ely, Minn., seeks ***summer staff and volunteers:*** trip leaders (leading 5- to 7-day canoe trips), base camp staff, and maintenance/grounds workers. Positions available 1-15 weeks. Contact Kathy Landis, 316-283-5132.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks a ***1/3-time music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Feb. 25, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Indianapolis seeks a ***half-time associate pastor*** with broad pastoral duties and a focus on young adults and youth. Position available May 1. Women and minorities especially encouraged to apply. Please contact Search Committee, First Mennonite Church, 4601 Knolton Road, Indianapolis, IN 46228; 317-251-1980.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** is seeking ***counselors and recreation, music and craft directors*** for its summer camps, June 27-July 8. You may select the camp or camps with which you would like to work, and you may join the staff for either one or two weeks. Three-month summer positions are also available in maintenance, dining hall and kitchen.

  Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for application materials.

- ***Single and Single Again retreat*** will be held April 16-18, 1999, at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. This year's theme is "Singles in the Church: Blessings and Burdens." The retreat is designed as a safe and relaxing weekend of sharing, praise and renewal for people widowed, never married, or single from separation or divorce. Leader: Rhoda Schrag. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for registration information.

- **Souderton Mennonite Church** seeks a full-time ***minister of worship and outreach***. Qualifications include solid commitment to Anabaptist theology, passion for worship and skills in organizing people for outreach ministry. Not a preaching assignment.

  Send resume to Souderton Mennonite Church, attn. Leadership Search Committee, 105 W. Chestnut St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **First Mennonite Church** is a mature, General Conference congregation of 225 members situated near downtown Saskatoon. We are in need of a full-time experienced ***associate pastor*** with an Anabaptist foundation. This person will have strong gifts in teaching, leadership and outreach; will be Spirit-filled, highly motivated with good interpersonal skills; will have the ability to reach out to the broader community, especially younger generations.

  Please send resumes to Search Committee, c/o Albert Warkentin, 112-2305 Adelaide St. East, Saskatoon, SK S7J 5H6.

- **Rainbow Mennonite Church** (Kansas City, Kan.), a talented, diverse, growing urban church (175 members), seeks a new ***pastor(s)*** to begin September 1999. The congregation has identified five areas (in ranked order) as the most important: preaching/worship leadership, teaching, spirituality, crisis pastoral visitation, and community activities. The gift of encouraging openness and inclusiveness in relating to congregational diversity is expected, as well as a strong commitment to Anabaptist teachings.

  Please contact, by March 9, Karen Goering Hostetler, 1305 Ruby, Kansas City, KS 66103-1043; 913-371-3057; email kghcvh@gvi.net.

- **Worldwide Gifts/Ten Thousand Villages/SHARE** has a part-time professional job opportunity as ***education coordinator***, responsible for assisting store's manager with outreach, education and Christian mission projects within the store and in the surrounding community of Champaign-Urbana, Ill.; approximately 10 hrs./week; flexible schedule and hourly wage to be negotiated.

  Contact Naomi Rempe, manager, 217-352-8200; or write Worldwide Gifts, 105 N. Walnut, Champaign, IL 61820.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a certified ***guidance counselor*** beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. This full-time position involves relating to students, parents and teachers in a kindergarten through 8th grade setting. Experience desired. Penn View serves 560 students in southeastern Pennsylvania.

  Send resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964.

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- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***programmer/analyst*** to develop, implement and design information systems in our IBM AS/400 and PC-LAN environment. Qualifications include bachelor's degree or equivalent experience; experience in or ability to learn programming languages, systems analysis, design and project management; and good interpersonal skills. MMA offers a positive, smoke-free work environment and an excellent benefit package.

  Send or fax resume to Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; (fax) 219-533-5264.

- **The Conference of Mennonites in B.C.** requires a full-time ***conference minister*** to minister to, be a support for and resource to pastors of B.C. churches. The conference minister should also be available to congregations for counsel pertaining to their pastoral needs. Although primary responsibilities are pastoral, the conference minister will also be the coordinator of conference direction and of the conference office. The position will begin Sept. 1, 1999.

  Please submit application with resume and request for job description to George Hoeppner, chair of search committee, 2191 Maywood Ct., Abbotsford, BC V2S 4Y9; 604-853-0829 (H); 604-856-8454 (O); fax 604-856-8436.

- **Pleasant View Homes, Inc.**, is opening a four-person retirement home for adults with developmental disabilities in Harrisonburg, Va., scheduled to open April 1, 1999. Applications are being accepted for the following positions: ***program coordinator, residential instructor, full- and part-time residential aides***. Duties will include direct care, community integration, training and case coordination for each resident, as well as maintaining the living environment of the home. Applications will be accepted until positions are filled.

  Contact Jane M. Sellers, director of ICF/MR Services, 1631 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802. EOE

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** has openings for ***regional vice presidents*** to manage regional offices. Responsible to develop the region by establishing and achieving sales and customer satisfaction goals in conjunction with corporate needs, to recruit and select new sales counselors, and to provide regional financial management including office budget. Qualified candidates will have a bachelor's degree (MBA desired); proven management experience (preferably in sales); strong interpersonal skills with the ability to supervise and motivate others; ability to become licensed in life and health insurance and securities; sales experience desired; active member of an Anabaptist congregation essential. Compensation is base salary plus bonus.

  Send or fax resume to Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; (fax) 219-533-5264.

- **Dock Woods Community**, a not-for-profit continuing-care retirement community, located in Lansdale, Pa., and sponsored by the Franconia Mennonite Conference, is currently seeking a ***full-time chaplain***. The position is responsible for providing residents with spiritual guidance and assistance. The chaplain coordinates, plans and conducts worship services, devotions and prayer meetings for Dock Woods Community. In addition, the chaplain is responsible for visiting and spiritual counseling of residents. Requirements for the position include a seminary degree and some training in Clinical Pastoral Education.

  Interested applicants should contact Renee Bickel in the Human Resources Dept., 215-368-4438.

- **Pleasant View Homes, Inc.**, needs a part-time ***personnel coordinator*** to organize and maintain personnel files. Responsibilities would include placing advertisements for employment, screening applications for employment, orientation of new staff, keeping current on employment and labor laws, maintaining organization personnel policies and procedures, assisting director of administrative services with benefit change and staff changes. Bachelor's degree in related field and personnel experience preferred. Applications will be accepted until position is filled.

  Contact Director of Administrative Services, Pleasant View Homes Inc., P.O. Box 426, Broadway, VA 22815. EOE

- **Elizabethtown Mennonite Church**, Elizabethtown, Pa., seeks a full-time ***pastor*** and a full-time ***associate pastor*** to shepherd a congregation of approximately 225 members. We are a member of the Lancaster Conference of Mennonite Churches and have an active interest in mission. The congregation's membership is diversified in its interests and occupations. Candidates should have a college degree and the senior pastor also have seminary training.

  Please respond by letter and resume to David Leaman, 53 Woodbine Drive, Hershey, PA 17033.

- **Second Mile** seeks a part-time ***project editor*** for new North American congregational peace program designed by Mennonites and Church of the Brethren to help congregations take deliberate steps in peace witness. Applicants should have background in Anabaptist peace theology, familiarity with Anabaptist constituencies, expertise in writing and editing curriculum, grasp of different learning styles, experience in organizing and leading projects. Responsibilities include refining format, developing writers' workshop, directing and working with writers, editing manuscripts.

  Inquiries and application requests due by March 15, 1999 to Doug Krehbiel, General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; 316-283-5100; email dougk@gcmc.org. Applications due March 31, 1999. Position begins April 30, 1999. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

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Do not neglect
to show hospitality to
strangers,

for by doing that
some have entertained
angels

without knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2

Russian refugees, circa 1920.

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Ana Gloria and her daughter fled the death squads in El Salvador. Today she works as a farm hand, trying to make a better life for her family.

At the end of the century, we again face the challenge of ministering to those, like Ana Gloria, looking for new lives in our communities. And again we face the opportunity to receive God's messengers in the form of strangers.

Mennonite Central Committee seeks to assist Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations and individuals who want to welcome the newcomer. To learn more about Ana Gloria's story, contact MCC and request a copy of *Between Two Worlds*, a new MCC video on immigration.

Mennonite Central Committee

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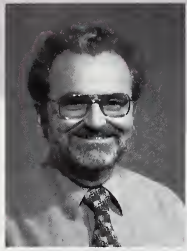


J. Lorne Peachey

No longer snakes or children of snakes

As a Christian most of my life, I hate to admit it, but I have a great deal of uneasiness when I read the Gospels. What bothers me most are Jesus' tussles with the Pharisees.

They begin with arguments, mostly about fine points of the law. They graduate to the Pharisees setting traps for Jesus and eventually plotting to kill him. Jesus retaliates by calling the Pharisees "hypocrites," then "whitewashed tombs" or "unmarked graves" and eventually "snakes" and "children of snakes."

"Wow," I tell myself. "I'm glad I wasn't a Pharisee." Then I remember this is precisely the kind of thinking Jesus trounced so roundly in the story of the tax collector and the religious leader (Luke 18:10-14).

Whenever I read that story, I want to identify with the tax collector more than with the Pharisee. Or with the woman caught in adultery more than with her accusers in that story (John 8:3-11). Or with the man born blind more than with the temple tribunal (John 9:1-34).

But in her book *We Are the Pharisees* (Herald Press, 1995), Kathleen Kern reminds us that the average Pharisee was just like the average churchgoing North American: "no more hardhearted, unloving or hypocritical." Both Pharisees and churchgoers feel strongly about beliefs and want to please God. But both can also become so caught up in the details of religious life that we forget or ignore the real presence of God in our midst.

We must always be aware that, with taking stands and making declarations about truth, come temptations to believe that the way we have figured things out is the only way.

That's why I return often to the Gospels, even though I find them uncomfortable. Here I'm forced to consider and reconsider this statement from Jesus: "I have come to call sinners to turn from their sins, not spend my time with those who think they are already good enough" (Luke 5:32, New Living Translation).

Ironically, it is also the action of a Pharisee that shows me what this means. Nicodemus, a religious leader, a teacher, one who also wanted to serve God, sneaked off to Jesus with a question, intense but unspoken, "What must I do to be saved?" In that question he acknowledged that all his beliefs and practices were not enough. He was a sinner. He needed help.

That is a point we must all come to—daily. We cannot figure things out on our own. When we try, we become self-centered, self-righteous, egotistical, proud. Says Kern: "No matter what our intentions might be, any good deed or quality almost inevitably degenerates into something petty or even wicked. Earnest desires to follow God's will in all aspects of our life can swiftly become legalistic. Desires to do the right thing become self-righteousness. Desires for purity become exclusiveness or snobbery."

As Christians today, we are pushed from all sides to take stands, to declare ourselves, to be disciples of truth. That is surely necessary when so much and so many seem to be without borders, mores or convictions. But we must always be aware that, with taking stands and making declarations about truth, come temptations to believe that the way we have figured things out is the only way. From there it is a short step to defending our truth no matter what. This makes us snakes, in Jesus' descriptions of the Pharisees, concerned primarily with protecting ourselves and our truth.

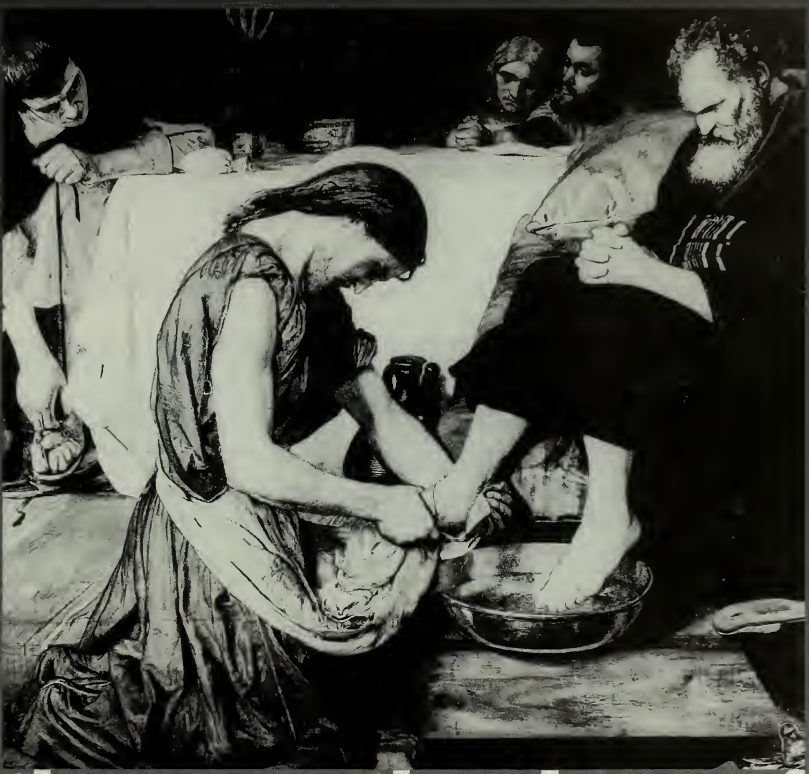
This is not a call to give up our sense of what is true, to take on false humility or to flagellate ourselves with our sins. Many among us surely need to have more of a sense of 0self-worth and of being valuable children of God. But we must put our best efforts into perspective, realizing that even in our good are the seeds of evil. This is part of what it means to be human.

Like Nicodemus, we must also hear Jesus' words of correction: "The Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven" (John 3:6). This is the truth that will set us free (John 8:32). Free to acknowledge that even our best will never be good enough. Free to rely on the indwelling of the Spirit to give us new life. Free to bring ourselves to God, even as we are, allowing Jesus to make our worst into our best.

When we do that, we are no longer snakes, or children of snakes. We become sons and daughters of God, children who will live with Jesus forever.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

March 2, 1999



the servanthood way of Jesus

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8 New church gets new look
9 Membership consultation expectations
15 Sin, repentance and membership

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Teaching and thinking

Re "The Radical Mission of Teaching and Thinking" by Gerald Biesecker-Mast (Feb. 2), I feel the need to express my disappointment at the clear suggestion that evangelical and secular institutions undermine commitment to the church. My own college education was received partly at a conservative Bible college and mostly at one of those evangelical institutions. At the Bible college, I learned their chosen theology. At the evangelical college (which was Wesleyan-sponsored but boasted students and professors from many Christian traditions, including Mennonite), I learned to think and evaluate various beliefs so as to develop my own personal theology as opposed to being spoon-fed that of my parents or elders.

I don't know about other parents, but I desire for my children that they be growing disciples in the kingdom of God. While my own journey in faith has brought me to appreciate the Mennonite church, I will never be so bold as to claim it is the right one while other traditions are wrong. My daughter is currently studying at an evangelical institution. As I watch her grow in faith, I am not fearful that her commitment to the church is being undermined. And I am most certainly not threatened by the possibility that she may not choose to be a Mennonite.—*Wendy S. Hoke Witmer, Manheim, Pa.*

It seems to me that "The Radical Mission of Teaching and Thinking" missed one of the most fundamental and most radical distinctions of Anabaptist education. It may also be one to which we in the Anabaptist higher education community have given the least systematic attention. This has to do with the basic epistemological understandings with which we approach the educative task and the basis upon which we make claims for knowledge or truth. I suspect that the important role that Anabaptists have ascribed to the hermeneutical community for discerning and interpreting "truth" within context and the insistence that "truth" finally must be embodied serves to distinguish it most radically from those colleges and individuals who understand truth primarily in textual and propositional terms. It is this epistemology which, if taken seriously and allowed to permeate our practice of higher education, has the potential to set apart Anabaptist scholarship in a far more fundamental way than whatever unique content the programs of our colleges and universities may offer, important though these may be.—*John Yoder, Fresno, Calif.*

Slow the train, smell the flowers

With regard to membership in the new denomination, any merger that does not fully and wholeheartedly welcome with open arms every member congregation in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church is pointless and seems arrogant and judgmental. If the discussion has reached the point of spiritual blackmail—"If you let them in, we won't come in"—then it seems that much of the cause is lost already.

Perhaps those who would encourage compromise and expediency for the sake of haste should listen more carefully to the Spirit and to the people. Perhaps God is not much concerned about haste—and more with unity. Let us slow down and smell the flowers. If it is true of the integration process that the reward is the journey, then let's make sure we don't miss it. —*Walter and Frieda Neufeld, Moundridge, Kan.*

Article 16 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective states, "In the process of discernment, it is better to wait patiently for a word from the Lord leading toward consensus than to make hasty decisions." Our rush toward integration reminds me of the engineer as he took his train down the steep mountain curve. As the train gained speed, the most important thing for the engineer to know was where the rear end of the train was. Too much speed at the critical time would derail the rear of the train. Will the speed of our integration train loose some of our cars? Could the train slow down for a decade toward a greater goal of unity? Why do some of us feel the leading of the Spirit to integrate now while others do not, yet both parties pray and seek discernment?

In the changing climate of the church, there is a need to work toward God's greater will and try to avoid the fallout of any decision that will destroy the greater will of God toward genuine unity. We dare not blame God for the decisions we make.—*Emma Richards, Goshen, Ind.*

Legs to stand on

Don Steelberg is correct, I fear, when he suggests the "binational church is dead" if binational structural links are not part of the new Mennonite Church ("Group Pushes U.S.-Canada Partnership," Feb. 2). His plan is a good beginning point. The U.S. and Canadian bodies are essential legs to the denomination, but without a binational structural leg, the North American denomination will collapse, to the regret of many.—*Sam Steiner, Waterloo, Ont.*

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readers say

Doing unto others?

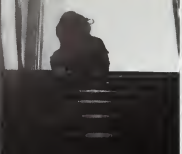
President Clinton's mass murder of our sisters and brothers in Iraq through bombings and economic sanctions is infinitely more evil than his lying under oath about sex outside his marriage. The impeachment and trial of the president have exposed the moral bankruptcy of Clinton, Congress and most U.S. public opinion. Only five of the 435 members of the House of Representatives had the conscience and the backbone to vote against Clinton's bombing of Iraq in December. As Martin Luther King Jr. said more than 30 years ago, "The greatest purveyor of violence in the world today is my own government."

Imagine if Clinton and Congress were deeply devoted to living the Golden Rule toward all people, including "enemy" nations, instead of their worship of and sworn allegiance to the severely flawed U.S. Constitution. Clinton and most of Congress claim to be followers of Jesus, who preached and lived the universal Golden Rule.—*Don Schrader, Albuquerque, N.M.*

Embarrassment

Numerous times we have seriously discussed canceling our subscription to *The Mennonite*, but I haven't wanted to give up the general church news, births, marriages and deaths. However, we do hide the magazine. We consider much of the content to be inappropriate reading for impressionable minds because of the unbelieving, rebellious attitudes expressed toward the Word of God and also because we would be very embarrassed to have our non-Mennonite and non-Christian guests think that *The Mennonite* represents what Mennonites believe officially. Or does it? We are waiting to see. Please make the magazine a herald for biblical truth and not a forum for evil.—*Mary Ethel Lahman Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover illustration: "Christ Washing St. Peter's Feet" by Ford Madox Brown (1821-1893). Photo by Three Lions Inc.



Membership:
Where are
we headed?

The servanthood way of Jesus

Inclusivenes

by Brent A. Koehn

The servanthood way of Jesus involves a theological paradox. Jesus both included a wide variety of people into his life and ministry and made strong challenges to these same people. If we Christians ignore either part of this paradox, we violate the servanthood way of Jesus.

Here are three examples (out of many) of Jesus embodying the paradox of inclusiveness and challenge.

Jesus and Judas at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-30): After the disciples had prepared the Passover meal, Jesus "took his place [at the meal] with the twelve." Judas was definitely a part of this event. In fact, the account of this meal in Luke 22:14-23 indicates that Jesus served Communion to the whole group of disciples, including Judas. Jesus included Judas at the Last Supper. During this same meal, Jesus also challenged Judas. While they were eating, Jesus startled his disciples by saying that one of them would betray him. Then Jesus singled out Judas as the guilty party. The challenge to Judas was strong. Jesus said, "Woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

Jesus and Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50): At the invitation of Simon the Pharisee, Jesus "went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table." Jesus sat at table with Simon and broke bread with him. In first-century Jewish culture, eating together was an act of depth and significance. Jesus included Simon in his itinerary and into his life. Then "a woman in the city, who was a sinner" arrived and "began to bathe [Jesus'] feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair." Simon was aghast that Jesus allowed this woman to touch him in this way. Jesus sensed Simon's critical attitude and challenged him about it. Jesus directly addressed Simon with a parable about two debtors, a probing question about the parable and Simon's lack of hospitality.

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria (John 4:1-30): Near a Samaritan city, Jesus rested at a well while his disciples went into town. When a Samaritan woman came to the well, Jesus asked her for a drink. She was taken aback and said, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" The narrator explains, "Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans." This conversation developed into a serious theological discussion. From the perspective of the Jewish religious leaders, this woman had three strikes against her: being a Samaritan, a woman and an adulteress (series of five husbands plus her current man). But Jesus saw her differently. He took the initiative to dialogue with this person—one of the dregs of society.

That day at the well, Jesus included the Samaritan woman in his life. Jesus also challenged the woman with the truth at a number of points. He told her, "You have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband." Also Jesus proclaimed, "You [Samaritans] worship what you do not know; we [Jews] worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."

Other examples of Jesus practicing the paradox include his relationship with a leader of the Pharisees (Luke 14:1-15) and the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53–8:11).

The teachings of Jesus touch upon the paradox of inclusiveness and challenge at a number of points.

The parable of the weeds among the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43): This parable of Jesus begins with a farmer who planted wheat in his field and an enemy who then "sowed weeds among the wheat." These two types of plants sprouted and grew up closely interspersed. The servants asked whether they should pull up the weeds. The farmer replied, "No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest." At harvest time, the reapers will collect the weeds and burn them. Jesus explains that "the one who sows the good seed [wheat] is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels."

During the present age, weeds ("evildoers") are not pulled up (separated) from the wheat ("the righteous"). It is only at "the end of the age" when evildoers are separated from the righteous and destroyed. Also, only the "angels" sent by the Son of Man are the agents

Five types of action by a conference over a congregation

1. No discipline: The conference takes no action.

2. Statement of variance: The conference issues a formal statement identifying points of variance with a congregation.

3. Challenge by many congregations: The conference directs its member congregations to challenge the variant congregation. This level of discipline involves a series of congregation-to-congregation meetings over a 12-month period.

4. Associate membership: The conference demotes the variant congregation to associate-member status for five years, during which the congregation has no voting privileges.

5. Expulsion: The conference severs the variant congregation from conference membership.

Comment: The servanthood way of Jesus rejects Type 1, which ignores challenge, and Type 5, which ignores inclusiveness.
—Brent A. Koehn

nd challenge

of separation and destruction. During the present age, evildoers are not separated from the righteous. The weeds are included in the wheat field. Also during the present age, however, certain plants are identified as "weeds." The identification of evildoing challenges evildoers.

Other teachings of Jesus also point toward the paradox of inclusiveness and challenge. In Matthew 7:1-5, Jesus instructs people not to "judge" others but to "take the log out of your own eye." Matthew 21:31 says that "the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you [Jewish religious leaders]."

A brother who sins (Matthew 18:15-20): The paradox of inclusiveness and challenge is also consistent with Jesus' instructions in Matthew 18. Jesus outlines a four-step process for dealing with a church member who sins: (1) "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone." (2) "But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you." (3) "If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church." (4) "If the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." Steps one through three call for inclusiveness and challenge. But does step four involve inclusiveness? An important question at this point is, How did Jesus relate to tax collectors? (Matthew 18:17 refers to people who collected taxes for the Romans.)

Jesus and Zacchaeus the tax collector (Luke 19:1-10): One tax collector with whom Jesus related was Zacchaeus. In fact, Zacchaeus was a "chief tax collector and was rich." All the Jews in the neighborhood knew this man was a "sinner." However, along a street under a sycamore tree Jesus initiated a relationship with Zacchaeus. "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I [Jesus] must stay at your house today." As a "guest" in Zacchaeus' home, Jesus likely ate meals with this man. Also, if Zacchaeus had a family, then Jesus might have talked with his wife and played with his children. Jesus included himself in the life of Zacchaeus. Jesus' self-invitation also challenged Zacchaeus. That day Zacchaeus' life was transformed. This tax collector pledged, "Half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much."

Jesus and Matthew the tax collector (Matthew 9:9-13): While Matthew was yet "sitting at the tax booth," Jesus called him to be one of his 12 disciples. Later that day, Jesus shared a meal in a house (probably Matthew's) with "many tax collectors and sinners." Jesus included Matthew in his inner circle.

However, Jesus' call also challenged Matthew to leave his job of working for the Romans. (The text is silent about whether or not Matthew confessed tax collecting as a sin.)

Jesus also spent time with Gentiles. On one occasion (Mark 7:24-30), Jesus entered a theological debate with a woman who was a "Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin." In fact, she won the debate. And Jesus insisted that the temple in Jerusalem should be "a house of prayer for all the nations [Gentiles]" (Mark 11:17).

Jesus included tax collectors and Gentiles in his ministry. The paradox of inclusiveness and challenge is indeed consistent with Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18 concerning a brother who sins.

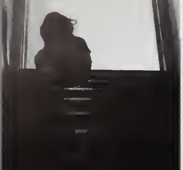
The servanthood way of Jesus has direct implications for us Christians. If we ignore either part of the paradox of inclusiveness and challenge, then we violate the servanthood way of Jesus. Within the local congregation, servanthood guides the process of dealing with a brother or sister who sins. Two types of action are rejected. Individualism, which says the sinful behavior of another is none of my business, is wrong. This stance ignores the challenge part of the paradox. Expulsion from congregational membership of a brother or sister who sins is also wrong. This ignores the inclusiveness part of the paradox.

The paradox in the servanthood way of Jesus also applies to the types of discipline an area conference may impose on a local congregation that is at variance with conference policy. Two types of discipline by a conference are wrong. No discipline is wrong because it ignores the challenge part of the paradox. Expulsion of a congregation from the conference is wrong because it ignores inclusiveness.

The servanthood way of Jesus involves a paradox. Jesus both included a wide variety of people into his life and strongly challenged these same people.

If we ignore either part of the paradox of inclusiveness and challenge, then we violate the servanthood way of Jesus.

Brent A. Koehn lives in Arlington, Texas.



Membership: Where are we headed?

What defines us as Mennonites—part 2

A symphony in thre movement

by R. Brent Alderfer and Vern Rempel

What makes a church Mennonite? Do people need to believe certain things? Are there certain behaviors required of members?

Many Mennonites used to dress differently. And there were strict rules about Sunday school picnics, television, lightning rods and wedding rings. But this was primarily in the wake of the fundamentalist revival coming to the Mennonites. As a result, the "true church" could not include women as leaders, had to have bishops in charge of Communion, and could not include divorced and remarried people as members.

We propose an analogy with the dynamics and inspiration of music. What if we heard church as a symphony in three movements: reading the Bible; living life in the presence of the Holy Spirit and meeting each other. Those are the themes that inspire the music.

The symphony does not open with a who's-in-and-who's-out theme. In response to the Donatists, who wanted to purify the church by driving out those who had collaborated with the Romans and to purge whoever they considered not holy, Augustine wrote: "The unity and catholicity of the church is not because of its own holiness, but the church is holy only because it comes from God."

The symphony of creating church is not about doctrine. Centering on doctrine is always a narrow-minded process. The leader's and people's favorites get in, and the stuff most challenging to them is usually ignored. Doctrinal statements, for example, often have lots to say on sex but nothing on money. Instead of membership requirements and doctrine, which are static, let the symphony be living, dynamic music.

1. Reading the Bible: Sound boring? It's not. What is carelessly called "the gospel" is actually a source of eternal life in words with mystical meaning and radical claim for our lives, yet we toss off these words like movie critics. It is impossible to even hear those words without devolving into the religious-political camps we have created about the Bible. The self-righteous constructionists vs. the immoral interpretationalists. Neither is right. It was our fallen ability as humans to see, comprehend and accept the Spirit that gave rise to the need for the Bible in the first place, so why do we think that we ever have it all figured out?

We have proven over and over that we can use the Bible to kill each other, spiritually and physically. Charles Kingsley wrote in the 19th century: "We have used the Bible as if it was a constable's handbook—an opium-dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they are being overloaded." In our century the Bible has been used to rationalize oppression, repression and violence against Arabs, women, Jews, African slaves, Anabaptists, gays and lesbians, Native Americans. We might ask when we will stop using the Bible as a stick of division and start looking to it for transformation.

The first movement of the symphony asks for a church that agrees to read the Bible, struggle with it and meditate about what it says, a church that doesn't divide based on whether we submit to, agree with or have prescribed beliefs about the Bible. It asks for a church whose central tenet is to follow Christ, who, for his interpretation of Scripture and life of faith was violently attacked and tortured to death in a public spectacle, in front of his powerless and horrified family and loved ones. This Christ is alive among us today, bidding us come and follow.

2. Living life in the presence of the Holy Spirit: At the end of the movie *Men in Black* is a sight gag that shows the entire galaxy as a ball, which in turn shrinks to the size of a marble and appears in the hands of an enormous alien, who slips our galaxy along with some other marbles into its marble bag. In other words, at some huge background level, the universe is all a meaningless game. Do all those junior high kids in the theater really need to see such a graphic image of cosmic meaninglessness?

As a Christian congregation we share the experience of being lifted out of hopelessness by connection to the Spirit, a Spirit that brings the light of hope and love to the darkest of places. Rather than meaninglessness in the midst of an empty or capricious universe, we believe that we live our lives in the presence of one who is holy, who is creator, redeemer, sustainer. And as the Holy Spirit guides us in living what we believe, it becomes real. We live in a universe filled with love and meaning. This is something we cannot prove but can

It matters so much where we put our bodies. If we haul our flesh and bones out and down to the meeting, we are doing the work of community. We are combating isolation, the privacy impulse run wild.

experience in our lives and with each other in the Holy Spirit. That is powerful music.

3. Meeting each other: The harmony in this movement arises out of our relationships. Even at the end of this most technologically independent century, people still have the capacity to get out of their cars, move away from the television, turn off the computer and materialize in front of each other, to meet each other face to face, to enjoy each other and to explore each other.

Christian community is not by remote control. It is us: teenager Laurie restlessly trying out her new stature as a tall young woman; 20-something Greg with new-job haircut; Larry wearing a tucked-in green shirt at the AA meeting in the church basement; Sally smiling as she dips the bread in the juice; child Conner asking smart, unanswerable questions; Clara crushing you with a hug; Bill fixing you with his twinkling eyes; that stranger with the funny beard. It is all of them seeking to live and move in happiness and love, which is the search for the Spirit of Christ.

It matters so much where we put our bodies. If we haul our flesh and bones out and down to the meeting, we are doing the work of community. We are combating isolation, the privacy impulse run wild. We let ourselves look each other in the eye, smell the smell, shake the hand and give the hug, experience the body language. We let ourselves be influenced by other living, moving humans. And in the Christian congregation, those other living humans frame their lives as a quest for that Holy Spirit path.

Coming at the end of the first two movements, this third movement confronts us with each other because the Spirit is confronting. But our meeting will be shaped and governed by our meditation on the Bible and empowered by the presence of the Spirit, rather than the other way around. We will know we are there when our church is a place to share our missteps in order to find our next step, to bare our addictions (yes, all of us) in order to find our new path and to express our dreams in order to find God's power in them. We will know we are in this movement of the church when we experience our hope rather than our hopelessness spilling over each other.

This third movement is strong. It's a tough church, not a soft one. It's not tough in angry sermons but in demanding the truth from each other. It asks tough questions rather than erecting tough walls.

How do you reconcile your wealth with Christ's Spirit in your life? How do you reconcile your sexuality with Christ's Spirit in your life? How do you explain your career as a contribution to the Spirit. Or do you? Do you need to? Who cares? Why does it matter? These are the triple fortissimo crescendos in this movement, separated by the quiet beauty of the Holy Spirit's music in our ears. These are the waves of passion that flow in and around "the land that is parching," as the hymn goes. Asking these questions helps define a church. Membership in a vital Mennonite congregation does not require that we follow a variety of rules but that we commit ourselves to follow the leading of the Spirit, no matter where that movement of the Spirit leads us in our questions and affirmations.

When we agree to ask each other such questions and listen to the Holy Spirit for answers, we will see our lives opened and exemplary, without resorting to codes of conduct. Consider the Anabaptists, the historic ancestors of our church. They were eager to be biblical, to be Christlike. Among the first blush of Anabaptists, back in the 16th century, one of the best ways the authorities had of rooting out these Anabaptists was by looking for people dedicated to clean living. If you were honest in your business dealings, generous and plain in speech (i.e., honest), you were at risk of being hauled in as Anabaptist. There were plenty of folks around with rules about those things, but the authorities looked for those with practices deeper than rules.

Regarding those who believe they live in the presence of the Spirit of the Holy One, the proof is in the pudding. Are their lives transformed? Are they honest and loving? Are they people whose character is worthy of respect and life-giving to all around? Then we can say, look at people who pray to God, who meditate in the Spirit, who seek to receive the presence of one who is good. This is how they live. "We are people of God's peace," says the hymn. May it be so, as we continue to live our lives in the presence of the Spirit of God.

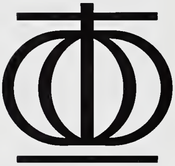
Membership in a vital Mennonite congregation does not require that we follow a variety of rules but that we commit ourselves to follow the leading of the Spirit, no matter where that movement of the Spirit leads us in our questions and affirmations.

R. Brent Alderfer is a member and Vern Rempel is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Denver. This is the second of a two-part article.

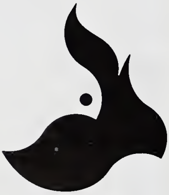
Symbol of the future takes flight

Integrated Mennonite Church gets visual identity

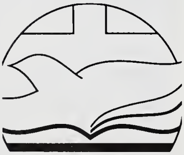
Current symbols



General Conference Mennonite Church



Mennonite Church



Conference of Mennonites in Canada

CHICAGO—While much work remains to integrate the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC), flying above it all will be a dove carrying an olive branch.

The GC-MC-CMC joint executive committee of the three merging bodies approved the visual symbol to represent the new Mennonite Church during its Feb. 12-13 meeting in Chicago.

The simple, green image is multifaceted in its representations. Designer Glenn Fretz notes that the dove symbolizes the Holy Spirit while the olive branch represents God's gift of hope and new life. CMC general secretary Helmut Harder notes a number of themes the new symbol suggests to him, including:

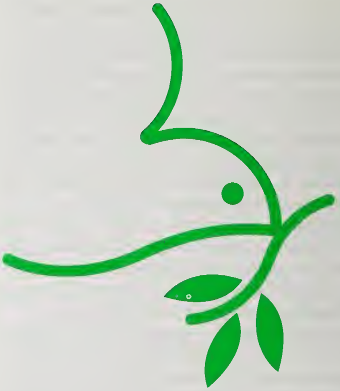
- the biblical themes of hope and creation
- the prophets' vision for a peaceable kingdom
- Jesus' baptism and Pentecost
- the Anabaptist vision of peace and renewal
- an invitation for us to move forward with Christ and aspire to a new heaven and new earth.

"A strength of the image is that it touches down at a number of places in our salvation history," Harder says.

Fretz, of Waterloo, Ont., calls the assignment the most challenging of his career. "It is quite a privilege to be given the task of trying to represent the spiritual heart and soul of a people," says Fretz, who has done design work for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Mutual Aid and other church and nonprofit organizations as well as corporations and government bodies.

He created the image with a team of designers, including Judith Rempel Smucker of Akron, Pa., and Ron Tinsley of Philadelphia.

Fretz will begin work with Barth Hague, Mennonite Mutual Aid vice president for marketing, on design application and development of a graphic standards manual. The symbol and graphic standards will be available for use by all parts of the new church—agency, congregation, area conference and denomination—in the United States and Canada following the churchwide convention in St. Louis in July.



Mennonite Church

The recently adopted dove and olive branch symbol for the new Mennonite Church (above) will replace the current symbols used by the three integrating bodies (left).

A visual identity system had been identified by the Integration Committee in January 1998 as a project requiring immediate attention. An earlier version of the adopted image was first presented to the Integration Committee in September 1998. The committee then recommended it to the GC, MC and CMC general boards for adoption at their joint meeting in November. After giving feedback at the meeting, the general boards directed the joint executive committee to take final action.

The new church's visual identity was based on results of a constituent survey conducted last spring. An integration communications task force identified objectives for the symbol, including:

- bring together people and programs
- project the core values of the church
- be easily adaptable
- position the new Mennonite Church as distinct within the larger Christian movement
- fit Mennonite sensibilities.—*GCMC, MC and CMC news services*

1999 Vacation Bible School

Exodus
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THE
THEN

The Bible will come alive for the children in your Vacation Bible School with Exodus: The Great Escape. This new VBS program teaches children about the Bible's message by letting them recreate the story of the Israelites' escape from slavery. Plus, Exodus: The Great Escape provides instructional projects to help children learn more about biblical times. Mission and service activities alert children to the needs of refugees today. Make your Vacation Bible School an unforgettable experience with Exodus: The Great Escape.

Vacation Bible School Schedule

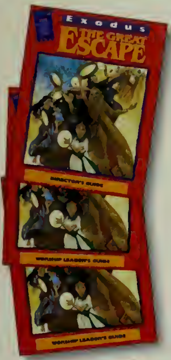
Session	2½ hrs.	People Responsible
Coming Together Gather in small groups	10 min.	Group Leader
The Community Gathers All groups gather for a Bible drama and other worship activities	30 min.	Drama coordinator Worship leader Group leaders: sit with their own group.
Connecting with the Bible Experience Have snacktime. Remember the story. Memorize Scripture. Choose from a list of activities	30 min.	Group Leader
Then and Now Activities Participate in hands-on activities about Bible times and activities related to contemporary mission/service	Two 35 min. sessions	Then and Now Activity Leaders
Closing Moments Small groups return to their own meeting place for a blessing and dismissal	10 min.	Group Leader

Bible School

BIBLE

NOW

Exodus: The Great Escape Box Contents



1 Director's Guide
Overview of the design and philosophy of this curriculum. Tips on planning, administration, and staffing.

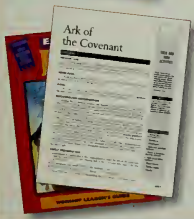
2 Worship Leader's Guides
Complete plans for five sessions of worship including how to incorporate the Bible drama, Bible background, songs, and more.

2 Drama Guides
Scripts for five Bible dramas, reproducible for use with this curriculum.

Group Leader Guides
2 Primary Leader's Guides (Grades 1-2)

2 Middler Leader's Guides (Grades 3-5)

2 Junior Youth Leader's Guides (Grades 6-8)
Detailed plans for guiding age-level groups in their vacation Bible school experience.



2 Then and Now
Activities Packets
A set of 15 loose-leaf sheets with specific plans and information for the leader of each activity.

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt
Serbia

1 Worship Booklet
Resource for students. Songs and Bible memory. A memento when Vacation Bible School is over.

1 Song Cassette
Recordings of songs used in Worship Guide.

1 Ark of the Covenant Kit
Example of the wooden ark. 1999 feature Then and Now Activity.

1 Worship Banner
Cloth banner of the Ark of the Covenant with Bible memory verse.

Missions Project Materials
Five pictures of refugees and a video about refugee children in Serbia.

Director's Resource Packet
1-17 x 22 Invitation Poster, 1-22 x 35 Invitation Poster, 25 Invitation Postcards, sample Worship Bulletin, sample Student Certificate, sample Staff Appreciation Certificate, sample Student Record, Order Form, and brochures.

(Items in this column are not all to scale.)

1999 Vacation Bible School

Exodus THE GREAT ESCAPE

Five Day Overview

The Exodus is the story of God delivering the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. God not only rescued the Israelites but also provided food and water in the wilderness. God gave them rules for right relationships and called them into a covenant relationship. God not only liberated the Israelites from slavery but also liberated them to a relationship with God.

DAY	SESSION TITLE	SCRIPTURE	BIBLE FOCUS	FAITH MEANING
1	God Provides for Us	Exodus 14-17	God provides food and water in the wilderness.	God rescued the people of Israel from slavery and cared for them in the desert. We remember God's care for us and grow in faith and trust.
2	We Want to Obey God	Exodus 19-20, 24	The Israelites receive rules for living together as God's people.	God offered the Israelites a covenant relationship. Relationships and the rules that guide them are gifts from God.
3	God Forgives Disobedience	Exodus 32-33	The people disobey God by worshipping the golden calf.	Disobedience separates us from God. When we confess our sin, God forgives us.
4	We Are on God's Side	Exodus 34-40	God renews the covenant with Israel showing God's surprising love.	God extended forgiveness to the Israelites who had worshipped an idol. God loves us and forgives us when we sin.
5	God Gives the Promised Land	Numbers 13-14, Joshua 1-3	The Israelites distrust God and must wait to enter the Promised Land.	The Israelites reached the Promised Land. Though lack of trust meant they had to wait, God continued to care for them. God's care and promises never fail.

For more information about Exodus: The Great Escape and The Bible THEN & NOW Series for Vacation Bible Schools, visit your local Christian bookseller, or contact us here directly at Herald Press

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Consultation on membership and homosexuality to assemble wide range of issues and opinions

When it comes to church membership and homosexuality, the differences are vast, the disagreements intense, the issues complex. And few expect one consultation to make them disappear.

The March 11-14 consultation on membership in the integrated Mennonite Church has been likened to the Jerusalem Conference of Acts 15. Participants will come to the gathering with concerns about polity, mission and the place and interpretation of the Bible. While organizers and participants are hopeful about the event's outcome, that hope needs to be tempered by reality.

"I think it would be an illusion to think all these things would be resolved," says James Waltner, a member of the consultation planning committee and of the Membership Committee.

The goal, Waltner says, is to find "common ground so we can work with and live with some of the differences among us."

The invitation-only consultation, to be held at a retreat center near Kansas City, Kan., will not be a decision-making event. Rather, it will be for counsel to the Membership Committee, which is charged with drafting guidelines for membership in the new church.

Attending the event will be representatives from the churchwide, area conference and congregational levels (see list at right). Also invited are two representatives from each of the four U.S. congregations that have been expelled from Mennonite Church (MC) area conferences but are still General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) members, plus one Canadian congregation facing possible disciplinary action, all for their positions on homosexuality and church membership. The consultation will be closed to the church media, including *The Mennonite.*

One pressing issue is how to deal with congregations that have been dismissed by one area conference but are members of another. The Membership Committee last fall proposed that all current GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) congregations automatically become members of the new church but that area conferences can set their own criteria for membership and discipline. Some quarters of the Mennonite Church, however, opposed allowing disciplined congregations into full membership in the new denomination without repenting. Revised membership guidelines will be presented at the consultation.

"It is not so much the issue of homosexuality as what we do with the Scriptures," says Fred Kanagy, North Central Conference moderator. Franklin Conference moderator Darrell Baer says his conference is concerned that the current discussions are an attempt to change the churches' official positions on homosexuality. "We believe the Scripture is quite clear," he says.

But several other conferences are opposed to barring membership to some congregations as a polity issue. "Our basic stance is that membership in the local congregation is best made by the local congregation," says Marv Zehr, conference minister for Western District Conference.

Pacific Southwest Conference moderator Duane Oswald echoes that point but says: "I believe there is room in our church for diversity [in polity]. ... I don't want to impose Pacific Southwest standards on other conferences.

"We need to focus on what unites us and not divides us."

While there has been speculation that the consultation's results could adversely affect integration, consultation participants say they will come ready to discern.

"I think we'll go in with an open mind to listen and to share our perspective," Zehr says. "We always have to be open to the moving of the Spirit, and we would take that counsel seriously."

Says Baer, "We're coming to the consultation with a deep desire for the church to find its way ... and the confidence that we can."

The consultation is a welcome chance for disciplined congregations to dialogue with the rest of the church, says Becky Kurtz, who will represent Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, which last year had its Southeast Conference membership terminated.

"We feel like it's a real good opportunity for people to see us as ... people of faith and not just as an issue," Kurtz says.

The consultation will be led by George J. Schemel and Judith Roemer from the Institute for Contemporary Spirituality at the University of Scranton (Pa.), a Jesuit school. The discernment process, described as "highly participatory," will feature prayer, meditation and sharing. The consultation will also include a worship series focusing on covenant, accountability, unity and diversity.

In addition, the moderators of the three integrating bodies have called on the people in the pew to raise their corporate and personal prayers for the consultation. The Membership Committee "needs our discernment and support," wrote GC moderator Darrell Fast, MC moderator Dwight McFadden and CMC moderator Ron Sawatsky in a letter sent to all congregations.—*Rich Preheim*

The consultation invitation list

Among those invited to the March 11-14 membership consultation are:

- Two or three representatives from all General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) area conferences;
- One or two representatives each from racial/ethnic groups;
- Representatives from integration-related committees;
- Representatives from GC, MC and CMC general boards;
- Selected churchwide staff members;
- MC, GC and CMC moderators and general secretaries;
- Two representatives each from Ames (Iowa) Mennonite Church; Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship; Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia; Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.; and South Calgary Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, Calgary. The first four have been dismissed from MC area conferences, while the last is facing possible disciplinary action, all for their positions on homosexuality.

GCMC-CMC photo by Aiden Schlichting Enns

Edgar and Edith Acuña, with their son Stephen, pose outside their home and the Mennonite congregation they lead in a poor barrio in Bogotá, Colombia. The congregation—now with 37 regular attenders—grew out of Edith's work with children in the barrio. Under her guidance, nearly 100 other people meet in homes in the barrio.

Despite obstacles, Colombian Mennonites bring ministry to poor in Bogotá barrios

SANTAFE DE BOGOTA, Colombia—Much of the urban ministry of Mennonites in Colombia takes place against a backdrop that challenges even the most courageous. Edith Acuña's story, for example, is one of a journey—literally—fraught with danger.

Acuña lives and works as a pastor in the poor Bogotá barrio of Juan Pablo II. Murder, drug abuse, assault and theft are daily occurrences on the steep and dirty streets. She moved to the barrio 18 years ago with her husband, Edgar, and three children. Baptized in Bogotá's Berna Mennonite Church, Acuña carried her Mennonite faith to her new neighborhood and began reaching out to the hurting women and children all around her.

Desperate for pastoral and theological training, Acuña took evening courses at the Mennonite seminary, about a 90-minute bus ride away. But fearing robbery or worse, bus and taxi drivers would not enter her neighborhood at night, leaving Acuña to walk the last 20 minutes in the dark and alone.

"It's very hard to walk through the streets here for fear of being attacked, especially on payday, even in the daytime," Acuña says.

Nevertheless, she earned a certificate in theology from the seminary and about six years ago started offering Bible instruction to 60 children in her home. A worshiping congregation soon emerged.

At that time, Edgar was not supportive and forbade her to work with the men of the community. "It was impossible to invite men [to worship services]," Acuña says. "[Edgar] would be jealous."

But still she persevered, with God's leading. When Acuña was looking to expand her ministry, a woman previously unknown to her came forward with money to buy the building next door to Acuña's house. The building has one room, hollow-brick walls and a corrugated tin roof. It now serves as the Mennonite church —painted blue with the hours of service and the symbol of the General Conference Mennonite Church in black.

"The area of counseling is tremendously important," Acuña says. "There is much abuse of children and women. The majority of young girls get pregnant very early."

In addition to their own congregation of 37 regular attenders, Edith, now joined by her husband, gives leadership to nine house churches, totaling nearly 100 people, and trains other leaders, working full-time with no salary.

In another Bogotá barrio, Santa Martha, José Rincón speaks out for peace, human rights, basic city services and the gospel of Jesus Christ. For the last six or seven years, he has pastored a Mennonite congregation in Santa Martha that now numbers about 45 people. They hold services in a small, storefront meeting place on one of the barrio's few paved roads.

At one point in Rincón's work with street kids, members of the military abducted him, put him in the back of a truck and interrogated him as they drove around. He has also received threats of personal violence from drug dealers in the neighborhood.—*Aiden Schlichting Enns for GCMC and CMC news services*

Profile: Colombia Mennonite Church

Despite its small size—about 1,200 people in 17 congregations—the Colombia Mennonite Church carries on a variety of ministries, employing about 90 people.

The Mennonite Biblical Seminary shares space with the national church office in Bogotá. MENCOLDES is a relief and development agency working to address the needs of the country's poor and mistreated. JustaPaz, the peace and justice agency, offers mediation training workshops throughout Latin America.

Other ministries include bookstores, a senior citizens home and schools.—*Aiden Schlichting Enns*

After 45 years, one of the first still lasts

Early missionary continues to serve church in Colombia

SANTAFÉ DE BOGOTÁ, Colombia—Look at the pillars of the church in Colombia and you will see Mary Hope Stucky.

One of the first General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries to Colombia, Stucky has been there from the beginning of the Colombia Mennonite Church more than 50 years ago. She has raised four children, supported her husband and his work and done much of the administration of a boarding school. Still vital and healthy at 82, she is still in Colombia and serving the church.

Growing up in a Presbyterian family in the United States, Mary Hope Wood wanted to be a missionary. She graduated from Wheaton (Ill.) College in 1938, and met Gerald Stucky from Berne, Ind., at what is now New York Theological Seminary. The Stuckys were married in 1943 and went to Colombia in 1945.

They were among the first four missionaries sent to Colombia by the General Conference Mennonite Church. The Stuckys, along with Mary Becker (now Valencia) and Janet Soldner, started a Mennonite boarding school for the healthy children of people with Hansen's disease (leprosy) in Cachipay, about 50 miles west of Bogotá.

The Roman Catholic church in Colombia was not open to Protestant missionaries, Stucky says, "but because we were going to work with children of people with Hansen's disease, the government was OK with us coming there."

The long-term aim was to establish a Mennonite church in Colombia, but the mission workers started with the American Leprosy Mission. The Stuckys worked at the school for 20 years. The school is still operating under the local Cachipay Mennonite congregation.

In 1966, the Stuckys went to Berne, where Gerald pastored at First Mennonite Church. They returned to Colombia in 1973 to establish a house church in Bogotá. After her husband died in 1988 at age 73, Stucky decided to stay in Bogotá, where two of her children live. Son Peter, a pastor at Teusaquillo Mennonite Church, and his family live in the apartment below Stucky. Her son Paul, who works at the Mennonite peace and justice agency JustaPaz, lives with his family down the street.

Stucky's daughter, Judy, lives with her family in Portland, Ore., and another son, Tim, and his family are in Tucson, Ariz.

"I wanted to live with one of my families," Stucky says. "I was healthy. I could still work, and I wanted to do something. I felt I wanted to continue the work here. I like the Colombian people. It is a beautiful country, and it's a beautiful climate.

"I'm not on the front lines anymore. But I'm supporting in prayer, keeping in touch with people and being supportive with grandchildren."

She also runs the MENNO Project, a two-week exposure trip to Colombia for people from North America.

Looking back over her years in Colombia, Stucky says: "I really admire the way the church has tried to meet the needs of the community. Although it's a small group, God has used [the Colombia Mennonite Church] to do many things, whether it is the peace witness, working with the whole person, carrying out the efforts of peace and reconciliation and nonviolence, or the work at the seminary with different denominations."

Stucky says her dreams are for the church "to grow spiritually in depth and also in numbers and have a continuing and growing influence in many areas. I have a lot of confidence in the leaders."—*Aiden Schlichting Enns for GCMC and CMC news services*

GCMC/CMC photo by Aiden Schlichting Enns

I'm not on the front lines anymore. But I'm supporting in prayer, keeping in touch with people and being supportive with grandchildren.

—Mary Hope Stucky

The Mennonite photo by Rich Preheim

A meal to feed justice

Christina Dyck (left) from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and Nathan Horst from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., eat supper during a Feb. 19 "hunger meal" as part of the annual Collegiate Mennonite Peace Fellowship Conference, hosted this year by Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Hunger meal participants were divided into first-, second- and third-class categories, representing the world's countries. First-class diners had a sit-down, multicourse banquet; second-class diners had beans and rice with plates and cutlery; third-class diners had a limited amount of beans and rice and no plates or cutlery. The conference, held Feb. 19-20, drew more than 60 students from six North American Mennonite colleges. Other conference activities included workshops on topics such as the Peace Tax Fund, student activism, conflict management, women in the church and homosexual rights; presentations by peace and justice workers; and a concert and dance. The conference was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee and Bethel College.

by the way ...

Of all the countries with Mennonites, Singapore has the fewest with 16. —*Mennonite World Conference*

Response efforts continue after Colombia quake

ARMENIA, Colombia—Colombian Mennonites are working feverishly on reconstruction in Armenia following the Jan. 25 earthquake which destroyed much of the city. The first 45 to 90 days will be spent on meeting basic health and comfort needs, job creation, demolition of damaged homes and pyschological care, says Cesar Moya, executive secretary of the Colombian Mennonite Church.

While international aid initially flooded Armenia, it stopped as quckly as it started. The city's food supply is nearly depleted, and the government estimates it needs 150 tons of food daily to feed nearly 250,000 people. The food shortage has produced looting.

Many people have left Armenia for neighboring cities, but many of those who remain are living in temporary homes made of plastic and cardboard. These crowded, makeshift camps, coupled with the lack of good drinking water, have created unsanitary conditions, and epidemics of smallpox and diarrhea have been reported. Mennonite Central Committee has promised to airlift 3,000 health kits to Armenia.—*MCC and MWC news services*

Oregon congregation receives building grant

SWEET HOME, Ore.—A small group of believers has received a $30,000 grant to help pay for its new facilities. The first half of the grant, from Mennonite Men's Tenth Man program, was presented Jan. 26 to River of Life Fellowship in Sweet Home.

The congregation two years ago secured a loan to purchase three buildings: a main building with sanctuary and fellowship hall, a small office building and a two-story structure intended for children's and youth ministries.

The Tenth Man program provides financial assistance to new churches to buy or build their first meeting places.—*GCMC News Service*

Prison ministry assumes Bible study courses

ELKHART, Ind.—After 44 years of publishing the Home Bible Study courses, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has transferred the project to Gospel Echoes, an independent Mennonite prison ministry organization, based in Goshen, Ind. Gospel Echoes has been the primary user of the courses in recent years.

The Home Bible Study is a series of eight courses, each with 12 lessons, geared toward people with little or no knowledge of the Bible or Christianity. Gospel Echoes distributed 109,000 courses last year in the United States and Canada.

Under the agreement, Gospel Echoes assumes full ownership of the Home Bible Study series, but MBM retains rights to translate and publish the materials outside North America. The main change expected with the transfer is the publication of the courses in book format.—*MBM News Service*

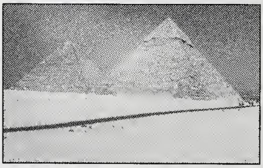
Book on Ethiopia church honored

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—The first book telling of the tremendous growth of the Mennonite church in Ethiopia has been recognized as one of the 15 outstanding books of 1998 for mission studies. The *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* honored *Beyond Our Prayers: Anabaptist Church Growth in Ethiopia, 1948-1998* by Nathan Hege, published last year by Herald Press.

Despite being forced underground during Ethiopia's 17-year Marxist reign, the Meserete Kristos Church grew rapidly with the use of cell groups. The church grew 20 percent a year and now numbers more than 100,000 people.

Goshen College adds peace, environment majors

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Goshen College board of overseers has approved new majors in environmental studies and in peace, justice and conflict studies. Both programs are slated to start next fall. "Goshen College has a rich foundation of courses, activities and facilities that relate to peacemaking and environmental studies in the broadest sense of the word," says Goshen president Shirley H. Showalter.



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Events

"Building Capacity, Increasing Impact" consultation on community development projects. Sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Contact: Melissa Aitkin, 800-348-7468, ext. 210.

Births

Balzer, Jesse Aaron, Jan. 21, to Janet (Roesler) and Paul Balzer, Merriam, Kan.
Birzer, Daniel Louis, Jan. 26, to Kevin and Michele (Moeller) Birzer, Leawood, Kan.
Clemens, Amber Nicole, Feb. 3, to Brian and Sandra (Derstine) Clemens, Harleysville, Pa.
Clemons, Emilee Kaye, Feb. 8, to Larry and Vickie (Johnson) Clemons, Pulaski, Iowa.
Cowles, Caleb Norris, Jan. 30, to John and Pamela (Koch) Cowles, Bloomfield, Iowa.
Derstine, Celena Rose, Feb. 9, to Brian and Denise (Gahman) Derstine, Sellersville, Pa.
Gingerich, Braden Duane, Feb. 1, to Annika (Yoder) and Corwin Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa.
Heinrichs, Katrina Larisa, April 23, 1998, received for adoption Feb. 1, 1999, by Donna (Wenger) and Romney Heinrichs, Hesston, Kan.
Hobbs, Nichole Anne, Jan. 26, to Anne and Lowell Hobbs, West Bath, Maine.
Horst, Amanda Joy, Feb. 9, to Darryl and Lisa (French) Horst, Lancaster, Pa.
Hostetler, Carissa Raine, Jan. 20, to Eric and Lavonn (Duncan) Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.
Kym, Brant Michael, Jan. 30, to Karen (Yoder) and Phil Kym, Grayslake, Ill.
Reimer, Abigail Faith, Feb. 8, to Cindy (Augustine) and John Reimer, Hesston, Kan.
Schrag, Gabriel Evan, Feb. 10, to LeAnn and Les Schrag, Newton, Kan.
Schrock, Sydney Jo, Feb. 2, to Darren and Stacy (Ashby) Schrock, Buhler, Kan.
Short, Mason Lane, Feb. 4, to Darin and Lisa (Nafziger) Short, Goshen, Ind.
Slabach, Dylan Paul, Jan. 25, to Paul (deceased) and Regina (Frey) Slabach, Lyndhurst, Va.
Tarbuck, Gabriel Weston, Dec. 17, to Leigh and Millie (Metzler) Tarbuck, Rochester, N.H.
Zehr, Sawyer Beryl, Feb. 3, to Beryl and Cynthia (Noftsier) Zehr, Croghan, N. Y.

Marriages

Schrag/Sommerfeld: Rachel Schrag, Newton, Kan., and Brad Sommerfeld, Newton, Dec. 23 at Newton.

Deaths

Brubacher, Sidney, 85, Wakarusa, Ind., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Vera Faye Culp Brubacher. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.
Clemmer, Kenneth, 74, Lansdale, Pa., died Jan. 30. Spouse: Edith Mae Plessinger Clemmer. Parents: Levi and Elizabeth Rittenhouse Clemmer (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Dale, Duane, Teresa Alderfer, Patricia Lowe; 11 grandchildren. Memorial service to be held later at Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Evans, Everett, 65, Royersford, Pa., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Dorothy Barndt Evans. Parents: Marvin (deceased) and Ruth Evans. Other survivors: children Kevin, Karen, Kathy Wilson, Susan Marsteller; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 13 at Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church, Royersford, Pa.
Fiorini, Dorothy Kulp, 72, Parkerford, Pa., died Feb. 6. Spouse: Samuel Fiorini. Parents: Walter and Florence Kulp (deceased). Other survivors: children Margaret, Walter, Samuel; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Limerick, Pa.
Fry, Susie Miller, 84, Middlebury, Ind., died Jan. 24. Spouse: Fred Fry (deceased). Parents: Moses and Elizabeth Yoder Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Marlene McClane, Esther Miller, Nancy Hagenbuch; 11 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.
Gratz, Helen Miller, 77, Bluffton, Ohio, died Feb. 7. Spouse: Justin Gratz. Parents: Paul and Gail Fisher Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children David, Karyl Eckenwiler; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 10 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
High, Helen Wismer, 93, Plumsteadville, Pa., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Jacob High (deceased). Parents: William and Anna Frankenfield Wismer (deceased). Survivors: children Lauretta Hartzell, Darwin; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 1, at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Landis, Arthur, 80, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Ella Mae Detweiler Landis. Parents: Elias and Katie Blank Landis (deceased). Other survivors: children Judi Kraszewski, Larry, Gerald, Timothy, Arthur; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.
Martin, Elizabeth "Betty," 70, Jackson, Ohio, died Jan. 31 of cancer. Parents: Titus and Edna Martin. Funeral: Feb. 4 at Neffsville, Pa.
Martin, Melinda, 77, Cambridge, Ont., died Feb. 4. Parents: Levi and Susannah Hoffman Martin, (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 6 at Kitchener, Ont.
Miller, Harley, 68, Yoder, Kan., died Feb. 8 of cancer. Spouse: Tillie Mullet Miller. Parents: Noah and Clara Yoder Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Nelson, Ray, Marion; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Yoder (Kan.) Mennonite Church.
Myers, Willis, 77, Lyonsville, Pa., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Myrtle Miller Myers. Parents: Robert and Maude King Myers (deceased). Other survivors: children Carolyn Raber, Eldora Hochstedler, James, Russell, Robert, Lyle; 15 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Conneaut Lake, Pa.
Penner, Anna Epp, 90, Beatrice, Neb., died Jan. 30. Spouse: Paul Penner (deceased). Parents: John and Anna Reimer Epp (deceased). Survivors: children Ervin, Don, Gene, Leona; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 2 at Beatrice, Neb.
Rempel, Irene Bartel, 86, Claremore, Okla., died Feb. 10. Spouse: Leonhard Rempel (deceased). Parents: John and Sara Quiring Bartel (deceased). Survivors: children Sylvia Froese, Dilores Rempel Suderman; three grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 13 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Seibert, Minnie Unruh, 95, Great Bend, Kan., died Jan. 22 of complications from surgery. Survivors: children Lowell "Dutch," Kenneth, Twila James, Rosemary George; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.
Shank, Naomi Martin, 92, Chambersburg, Pa., died Jan. 5. Spouse: Charlie Shank (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Hettie Horst Martin (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Ruth Diller, Glenn, Marlin, Raymond; 28 stepgrandchildren; 63 stepgreat-grandchildren; numerous stepgreat-great grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.
Weaver, Arthur, 81, Elkhart, Ind., died Feb. 4. Spouse: Mary Jane Kilmer Weaver; Parents: Clarence and Mary Weaver (deceased). Other survivors: children Frances Weaver-Grill, Loren. Memorial service: Feb. 8 at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Correction: In the Jan. 26 listing of Arnold Siemens' death, his mother's name was Elise Froese Siemens, and a memorial service will be held April 8 in Buhler, Kan.

classifieds

- **Menno Haven Camp** and Retreat Center, located in central Illinois, seeks an ***executive director***. For a job description, contact Doug Roth, 309-263-8933, or Wanda Bouwman, 630-427-1317.

- **Hope Mennonite Church**, Wichita, Kan., seeks a half-time ***director of ministry development***. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Search Committee, 868 N. Maize Road, Wichita, KS 67212; 316-722-0903; fax 316-722-5173.

- **Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship**, dual conference, attendance 40 to 50, is seeking a part-time ***interim pastor*** (up to half-time for two years). Job description available.

  Submit resume, references and letter of interest to John Snyder, 2216 Forest Rd., Lansing, MI 48910; 517-393-0378; email jlsnyder@acd.net. Please apply by March 23. MSU-MF supports affirmative action and equal opportunity in hiring.

- ***Opportunities for service!*** **Eastern Mennonite Missions** has opportunities for people from youth to retirees to serve overseas in ministries that include teaching, leadership development, church planting and community development, for one or more years. A few of our current needs include leadership development among the Maasai in Kenya, and teachers for missionary children in Asia.

  If God is nudging you to find out more, please call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***certified guidance counselor*** beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. This full-time position involves relating to students, parents and teachers in a kindergarten through eighth grade setting. Experience desired. Penn View serves 560 students in southeastern Pennsylvania.

  Send resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Rd., Souderton, PA 18964.

classifieds

- **Lehman's Store** needs an ***accounts payable clerk*** to accurately post, file, match and verify invoices and other accounting functions using our state of the art computer system. Attention to detail, thorough understanding of debits and credits important. Five years experience in similar sized company or two-year accounting degree required. Competitive pay package including free hospitalization, generous retirement package and great working environment.

  Send resume to Lehman's, Attn. Donna, P.O. Box 41, Kidron, OH 44636. An Equal Opportunity Employer

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- *That You May Believe* video with Myron Augsburger and Jack Suderman

Faith & Life Press
Newton, Kan. 1-800-743-2484

Herald Press
Scottdale, Pa. 1-800-245-7894

Provident Bookstores
1-800-759-4447

- **First Mennonite Church** is a mature, General Conference congregation of 225 members situated near downtown Saskatoon. We are in need of a full-time experienced ***associate pastor*** with an Anabaptist foundation. This person will have strong gifts in teaching, leadership and outreach; will be Spirit-filled, highly motivated with good interpersonal skills; will have the ability to reach out to the broader community, especially younger generations.

  Please send resumes to Search Committee, c/o Albert Warkentin, 112-2305 Adelaide St. East, Saskatoon, SK S7J 5H6.

- **The Conference of Mennonites in B.C.** requires a full-time ***conference minister*** to minister to, be a support for and resource to pastors of B.C. churches. The conference minister should also be available to congregations for counsel pertaining to their pastoral needs. Although primary responsibilities are pastoral, the conference minister will also be the coordinator of conference direction and of the conference office. The position will begin Sept. 1, 1999.

  Please submit application with resume and request for job description to George Hoeppner, chair of search committee, 2191 Maywood Ct., Abbotsford, BC V2S 4Y9; 604-853-0829 (H); 604-856-8454 (O); fax 604-856-8436.

- **Elizabethtown Mennonite Church**, Elizabethtown, Pa., seeks a full-time ***pastor*** and a full-time ***associate pastor*** to shepherd a congregation of approximately 225 members. We are a member of the Lancaster Conference of Mennonite Churches and have an active interest in mission. The congregation's membership is diversified in its interests and occupations. Candidates should have a college degree and the senior pastor also have seminary training.

  Please respond by letter and resume to David Leaman, 53 Woodbine Drive, Hershey, PA 17033.

- **Hesston College** invites applications for the position of ***associate director of development***. Qualifications: responsibility, integrity, ability to work independently, excellent communication skills and understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite church, Hesston College and Mennonite higher education. The associate director of development cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements Annual Fund strategies, coordinates donor programs and manages development office efforts in his or her assigned region.

  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, director of development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8149 or email elamp@hesston.edu. EOE

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for a ***material resource coordinator*** for the MCC material resource center at The Depot in Goshen, Ind. The coordinator's responsibilities are to oversee the collection and processing of material resources for shipment. The coordinator is on MCC staff. The position is scheduled to be filled by March 1, 1999.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at MCC Human Resources Dept., 717-859-1151, email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org; or Dan Beachy at The Depot, 219-534-4070; or MCC Great Lakes, 330-857-7721. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

- **Second Mile** seeks a part-time ***project editor*** for new North American congregational peace program designed by Mennonites and Church of the Brethren to help congregations take deliberate steps in peace witness. Applicants should have background in Anabaptist peace theology, familiarity with Anabaptist constituencies, expertise in writing and editing curriculum, grasp of different learning styles, experience in organizing and leading projects. Responsibilities include refining format, developing writers' workshop, directing and working with writers, editing manuscripts.

  Inquiries and application requests due by March 15, 1999 to Doug Krehbiel, General Conference Mennonite Church, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114; 316-283-5100; email dougk@gcmc.org. Applications due March 31, 1999. Position begins April 30, 1999. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

Classified advertising space is available at $1.10 per word, minimum of $30, for one-time placement. For more information, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Sin, repentance and membership

by Ryan Ahlgrim

Should a police officer be given membership in a Mennonite congregation? What about an unmarried couple who are living together?

Although practices differ, most Mennonites would probably reject offering membership to these people. We may use this rationale: (1) as a denomination we have taken an official position that various actions are a sin (e.g., the use or threat of violent force, and sex outside marriage), (2) membership in a congregation necessitates a willingness to repent of one's sin, (3) people who continue to engage in these actions are not repentant, (4) therefore it is wrong to accept them into membership.

This rationale makes sense to me, and I respect its use. But based on my pastoral experience and my understanding of repentance, it sometimes fails on the third point. Perhaps these are repentant people, and if so I must keep the membership door open.

Here are five possible responses to sin: (1) a sin is recognized, regretted and discontinued; (2) a sin is recognized and regretted but is only slowly or partially discontinued; (3) a sin is recognized and regretted but continues; (4) a sin is recognized but is purposely continued; (5) a sin is not recognized and therefore continues. Which of these responses represent genuine repentance? Which do not?

Clearly the first response represents repentance. And in the majority of cases, we would accept the second as genuine. The third is more troubling. If behavior is unchanged, we tend to doubt that the repentance is genuine.

Perhaps it depends on whether the person is self-deceptive, lazy or caught in an addictive habit stronger than one's will power. In any case, we must keep in mind Jesus' warning not to reject the repentance of those who sin and repent even seven times a day (Luke 17:3-4).

The fourth response is not repentance. But what about the fifth? If a sin is not recognized, it is not being consciously regretted or repented of. But does that mean people with unrecognized sins in their lives are unrepentant?

Repentance does not mean we are aware of all of our sins but that we are aware of our pervasive selfishness, for which we are profoundly sorry, and we turn our lives over to God for God to be in control and lead us. Once we are in a state of repentance, God's Spirit gradually reveals particular sins in our lives, permitting us to change those sins. The mutual accountability of a congregation is a part of this nurturing. But the Spirit convicting us of sin continues throughout our lives.

I have never met a person who did not have unrecognized (and therefore unrepentant) sins. We all can point out the faults of others more easily than our own. Our culture blinds us to sinful and destructive behaviors we participate in daily, such as driving cars that pollute the air and contribute to global warming. No one joins a church without carrying a load of unrecognized sins. And just because someone, even a congregation, tells us a particular behavior is wrong does not mean we will be able to see it that way. We cannot be forced to regret what we have not yet, by our own Spirit-led conscience, discovered to be wrong.

Doesn't receiving a police officer or a sexually involved couple into membership imply acceptance of their sins? By itself, no. When an overweight person is taken into membership, is the congregation accepting gluttony? When a smoker is taken into membership, is the congregation accepting smoking? When the owner of a luxury car is taken into membership, is the congregation accepting status-seeking or consumerism? A congregation's stand on particular sins is made clear by what it teaches and strives for, not by who it takes into membership. It is a fundamental Christian doctrine that we can and must make a distinction between accepting sinners and accepting sin.

The basis for membership in the church should not be whether a candidate is or is not committing a particular sin, unless that sin threatens others' safety. Rather we should focus on genuine commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord, evidence of God's Spirit at work, openness to mutual accountability and growth, and support for the mission of the Mennonite church. If we make repentance (and church membership) an ethical achievement, we are doing what Jesus and Paul said not to do, since this leads to spiritual pride, dividing people into moral categories and righteousness based on works instead of faith in God's grace.

Whether a candidate for membership is repentant or not can only be discerned by believers intimately acquainted with that person. Membership in a local congregation must be discerned and decided by people in that congregation. A conference may provide guidelines for congregations to use, but on a case-by-case basis, only the congregation can decide.

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Faith resources

Leaving Anabaptism: From Evangelical Mennonite Brethren to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches **by Calvin W. Redekop (Pandora Press, 1998, $19.99 U.S., $29 Cdn.) blends storytelling with sociohistorical analysis.**

When Someone You Love Is Dying: Making Wise Decisions at the End of Life **by David Clark and Peter Emmett (Bethany House, 1998, $8.99) offers guidance for people in crisis.**

Congregational Trauma as a Basis for Hope and Healing **by Jill M. Hudson (Alban Institute, 1998, $14.95) addresses care strategies, adapting worship, assessment tools for measuring healing, handling the media and how tragedy can give rise to learning.**

From Stuck to Unstuck—Congregational Impasse **by Kenneth A. Halstead (Alban Institute, 1998, $18.25) helps leaders and congregations free themselves from deadlock on issues.**

Pregnant and Single: Help for the Tough Choices **by Linda Roggow and Carolyn Owens (Herald Press, 1998, $8.99 U.S., $13.35 Cdn.) discusses pregnancy, adoption, single parenting and marriage.**

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Gordon Houser

The power of symbolic action

Do this in remembrance of me.—Luke 22:19

Jesus knew the power of symbolic action, which was a part of his culture, his religious upbringing. Jews celebrated Passover to remember their liberation from bondage in Egypt. They built booths ("succoth") to celebrate the ingathering of the harvest.

From the Scriptures Jesus knew about prophets like Isaiah, who "walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Ethiopia" (Isaiah 20:3), and Ezekiel, who lay on his left and his right sides for 390 days to communicate the length of punishment for Israel and Judah.

Jesus performed actions to signify meaning beyond the deeds themselves. He ate with "sinners," drove money changers from the temple, rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, sent a "legion" of demons into a herd of pigs, plus many more such deeds.

Perhaps more symbolic actions in our worship would enhance our experience of God's presence among us, a truth we proclaim in words.

We may employ symbolic actions in our lives and in our worship to help us experience what it means to follow the way of Jesus. One obvious example is our participation in Communion, a practice Jesus began and called us to observe in order to remember him.

On Feb. 17 I attended an Ash Wednesday service at an Episcopal church. The liturgy helped me remember that "from dust you are made and to dust you shall return" (from *The Book of Common Prayer*). It helped me recommit myself to following Jesus, which includes repentance and sacrifice.

Mennonite worship mostly involves singing and speaking. We tend to avoid symbolic actions, with one exception—foot washing. The illustration on this week's cover of Jesus washing Peter's feet is a powerful symbol of servanthood. And performing such an act is a good reminder of the stance we are to take with our brothers and sisters in the church, that of a servant.

Perhaps more symbolic actions in our worship would enhance our experience of God's presence among us, a truth we proclaim in words. I've been in churches where worshipers bow before an image of Christ at the front (such as a crucifix or an icon). For them this action is not bowing to the image but to the Lord we worship. It is a sign of reverence.

Such actions affect not only individuals but can have a unifying effect on the congregation. Despite whatever differences we have, we come together to the Lord's Table as sinners seeking God's love and forgiveness in our lives.

Symbolic actions not only aid us in our worship; they also aid us in our mission. They can help us walk in others' shoes. According to *National Catholic Reporter*, seventh-grade students at St. Odilia School in Shoreview, Minn., took part in a poverty unit designed by the school's computer science teacher, Linda Hanson. Her students had to apply for public assistance and complete application forms to move into a homeless shelter, a project that took hours. Students filled out long, complex forms and headed for a line. After waiting in line, some encountered a "processor" who either spoke only Spanish or was such a nitpicker that they had to redo their forms and stand in line again.

"This taught the students about the dehumanizing aspect of poverty," Hanson says. Anna Lamusga, a student, says she will never again stare at a poor person. "I have an understanding of how they must feel," she says.

Christian Peacemaker Teams helps us relate to others' suffering and call our leaders to justice. CPT's "Tent for Lent" campaign asks people to pitch a tent at a government building or in their congregation to remind themselves and others that the Israeli government is demolishing homes of Palestinians, who must then live in tents (see *The Mennonite*, Feb. 23, page 14). Staying in a tent helps us feel these people's plight.

Let us find new ways to worship God and follow Jesus' call to justice and compassion. Symbolic actions can help us in this quest.—*gh*

the Mennonite

March 9, 1999

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eaceful dialogu

A call to be COs against contentious debate

5 What I'd like to give my children
6 Jesus the mediator, Jesus the servant
9 Ortiz named MCC U.S. executive director
16 The golden challenge of right relations

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Integration issues

A great impetus for rebirth could be nurtured by declaring that no congregation will be part of the integrated Mennonite Church until it decides to support its vision and mission. Each congregation could be given a packet that would include the new denomination's vision, a summary of the confession of faith, description of the denomination's programs and resources, and a synopsis of the ministerial leadership polity. The congregation could review these documents and by a corporate vote make a commitment to the new denomination and to an area conference. It could also decide not to make that commitment.

The decision to support would be submitted to denominational and area conference offices. The congregational action would be received without censure. The intention of the congregation would be enough to validate participation in the new denomination. Every congregation could then actively participate in the rebirth of a denomination poised to move into the new millennium.—*Ed Rempel, Colorado Springs, Colo.*

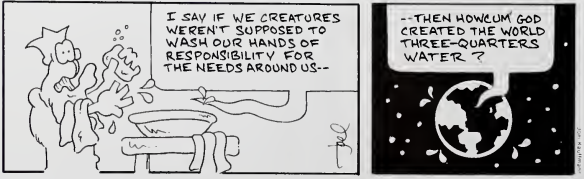
Re integration (I'd rather call it a union) and the expulsion of congregations with dual memberships: Just as forcefully as they were expelled by one area conference, they were retained by the other conference. The conferences are in the union due to the fact that the merger is a merger of conferences, not congregations or individual people.

Therefore, all we affirm in the establishment of the union is that congregations are part of one conference. A congregation doesn't need to belong to two conferences to have acceptance. Being "owned" by one conference is all that can be asked of any congregation or person. This doesn't mean discipline of individuals or congregations should stop. It just can't be done in the framework of a union of conferences.—*Paul Kauffman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

The Feb. 9 issue had some excellent articles on integration. The love and trust that Peter Dyck mentioned (Speaking Out) should be embraced by all of us so that we can attain the unity and trust that Jim Schrag pointed out ("Facing Up to Our Differences"). May God bless all of us who are being affected by the merger.—*Ivan Amstutz, Dalton, Ohio*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


I SAY IF WE CREATURES WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO WASH OUR HANDS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE NEEDS AROUND US--
--THEN HOWCUM GOD CREATED THE WORLD THREE-QUARTERS WATER ?

Blessings from small sacrifices

A letter from the Feb. 9 issue has reaffirmed why I remain a subscriber of *The Mennonite*. Carl Hansen of Ethiopia challenges Mennonite churches, schools and institutions in North America to consider a 1 percent to 10 percent tithe on all building projects, to be given to the many needy sister churches in the Third World. In the initial discussions of my own church's proposed building addition, such a tithe was considered but somewhere along the way was lost. As worthy as the vision for local mission is, the fact remains that our projects are carried out with the full knowledge that our brothers and sisters around the world have far less than we do. In most areas of North America, the local mission of the church would not suffer as a result of a 10 percent tithe. Additionally, it would be a blessing to witness the good that could come from a small sacrifice on our part when placed in the hands of the truly needy.

Thank you, Carl, for the challenge of speaking out on the sin of neglecting the poor, which hits home harder for most of us reading this magazine than does the overemphasized sin of homosexuality.—*Deborah Good, Harleysville, Pa.*

Good and radical

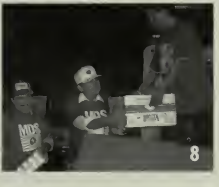
Gerald Biesecker-Mast's article "The Radical Mission of Teaching and Thinking" and the editorial about Mennonite schools (both Feb. 2) were greatly appreciated. I hope that all parents with children in middle and high schools read these articles. As a graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, I believe that our Mennonite church colleges are among the best.—*Carolyn Lehman Henry, Clinton, N.Y.*

Editorial inspiration

Thank you for your always excellent editorials. In "Past and Present Demonstrate Hope for Future Leadership" (Feb. 9), Rich Preheim draws a fine lesson of hope and encouragement from the exemplary and enormously inspiring life of Robert Kreider. How grateful we are to have known this man! From this pinnacle you lead us on to hope in our own reality. In "Only by Prayer and Fasting" (Feb. 16), J. Lorne Peachey provides discernment I need

theMennonite

Vol. 2, No. 10, March 9, 1999



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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999— by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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readers say

for Lent. Thank you for this valuable guidance and challenge to my spirituality in a difficult time of the liturgical church year and in this tumultuous time in the history of our church. *—Fremont Regier, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*

Ending the debate

I am so glad you are ending the debate on homosexuality. We have decided to get *Christian Living* instead of *The Mennonite* because we felt this issue of homosexuality was getting way too much press.*—Betty Birky, Middlebury, Ind.*

I was disappointed to read that the decision has been made to omit letters to the editor on homosexuality. I have enjoyed and learned from the exchange of opinions and beliefs. *—Carolyn Grasse-Bachman, Lancaster, Pa.*

Still not getting it

It has been a year since the first issue of *The Mennonite*, which began as an attractive, informative and Christian publication. The Feb. 17, 1998, editorial proclaimed, "What You See Is Not Necessarily What You'll Get," and I did have high hopes that the small print used in For the Record would be changed to something more readable. I was especially optimistic after reading that other subscribers felt the same way.

While I may be mistaken, there seems to have been no noticeable improvement in this important feature despite the flood of request from subcribers. Surely more space could be found to use larger print and wider columns for the births, marriages and deaths. One way to do this would be to reduce the size of all illustrations. Beginning the lead article on the cover would also save space for the feature many senior citizens turn to first: the obituaries.*—Hazel Nice Hassan, Goshen, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Be a CO against contentious debate

by Roger Piper-Ruth

Like physical warfare, as more and more information becomes available we may find the debate has its roots more in misunderstanding, lack of knowledge and lack of communication than in some great evil.

In World War II, many Mennonites chose to be conscientious objectors because they believed the radical way Jesus taught. Although the cause against Nazi Germany seemed just,we recognized a higher law, to love the enemy, to not return evil for evil.

We believe the violent methods employed by our armed forces will not bring about a result Christians desire. We cannot take either side or employ the methods of either side.

Due to the dedication and sacrifice of some of our church leaders, an option was created for the conscientious objector. The government allowed Mennonites to do alternate service for the purpose of healing, mending and caring. In time of world war there is much to be healed, mended and cared for.

We live in a culture where the normal course of action is to attack verbally those with a different opinion from our own. A better course of action, one more in keeping with our calling to be peacemakers, is to become conscientious objectors (COs) to these social debates in much the same way we object to physical violence during war.

As in physical warfare, one side of a particular debate may seem to be more right than the other. But often the methods employed by the debaters will not bring about a good result. In our role as peacemakers, we declare ourselves COs and refuse to take either side. Instead we begin our alternative service of looking for victims on both sides. We offer caring, healing and mending because, as in times of war, there are always plenty of victims in a contentious debate. We may find this difficult. Those who see in the debate an enemy that needs to be vanquished will misunderstand us.

Like physical warfare, as more and more information becomes available we may find the debate has its roots more in misunderstanding, lack of knowledge and lack of communication than in some great evil. For example, an issue that caused division among Mennonites —Sunday school—turned out to be not as evil as some suspected at the time.

Great evil: Our alternative service should promote understanding, knowledge and communication. As COs we realize that using improper methods to deal with conflict may be a greater evil than the issue itself. It is a great evil for the world to look at the Mennonite church, a leader in the peace church tradition, and see a church unable to solve conflict within itself in a satisfactory way.

I'm not advocating "debate-dodging"—leaving the debate behind to escape to some other reality. On the contrary, the CO's service of bringing two sides together entails as much if not more research and commitment than if one chooses to be strongly on one side.

Was Jesus an "issues CO"? A look at three passages shows us that sometimes he was and sometimes he wasn't.

The cleansing of the temple (Luke 19:45-48) is an example of an issue where Jesus was not a CO. This was not a hot issue of the day. People didn't have debates about it on the streets. The temple money changers were providing a needed service and making a good profit. Most saw this as good for the economy and good for those coming to sacrifice. Except for Jesus. He saw it as an issue to take a stand on. A holy place turned into a business venture was more than he could tolerate.

But when Jesus cast out the money changers, he used the power of his character and his words, not violence: "All the people were hanging upon his words" (Luke 19:48). "All the multitude was astonished at his teaching" (Mark 11:18b). Jesus influenced these people the same way he influenced people throughout his ministry. He spoke timely words of wisdom and healing.

Jesus' example shows that if we are called to take a strong stand on an issue, more than likely that issue will not be one of the current hot issues in our culture. And when taking a strong stand on an issue, we must not revert to the methods of our society but follow the example of Jesus. To do otherwise will not bring the result we desire.

The question of paying taxes to Caesar (Matthew 22:15-22) is more representative of Jesus' response to hot issues of the day. This issue went to the core of Jewish belief in their status as a chosen nation. On this Jesus chose to be a CO. He simply refused to get involved,

Marilyn Nolt

When confronted with an issue, the words we speak must be gentle and wise, spoken in a way that makes understanding possible.

to take a side. He realized that one more voice, even one of authority, on either side of the debate would add nothing. Instead of entering into the contention, he gave his gentle answer, and the tension of the moment lessened.

Gentle and wise: If a debate is already well established, most likely our best course of action is to become a CO. Our voice added to one side or the other will only add to contention and strife. When confronted with an issue, the words we speak must be gentle and wise, spoken in a way that makes understanding possible.

A final example of Jesus choosing to be an issues CO illustrates the power available in this option. In the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11) one might have expected Jesus to be drawn into the debate. As a religious leader, he could have felt the need to defend the law of Moses. On the other hand, he could have been expected to side strongly with the woman. Jesus didn't miss the fact that the woman's partner in crime, the adulterer, was not brought before the authorities. The man's absence was an unjust but common practice of the day.

But instead of taking a side, he chose to be a CO. He was mostly silent. He pondered what to say and was able to give a thoughtful response, a wise, gentle answer: "He who is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." This dismantled the debate. The accusers were able to see the victim for the first time. By recognizing their own imperfection they were brought into intimate contact with the victim and were unable to continue the theoretical fight.

Jesus' position brought not just healing to the woman but the potential for healing to the victims on the other side, her accusers. Here is the power of being a CO. Instead of stirred-up anger, there is less tension. Instead of a sword of contention, there is healing.

Plenty of people are ready to fight, ready to spread fire across the land, ready to draw the sword. As Mennonites we have been fortunate often to see things in a different light. We are called to be peacemakers in times of war and in times of contentious debate. Following Jesus' example, we are to seek out the victims on both sides to provide caring, mending and healing.

Roger Piper-Ruth is a member of Hyde Park Mennonite Church in Boise, Idaho.

What I'd like to give my children

by Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus

There is much I wish for you in life, but if I could name only one gift, it would be Jesus-inspired compassion. I do not mean a condescending pity that leaves you sad while you feel superior and lucky as you look on those who suffer. I mean a sympathetic awareness of others' distress together with practical, personal efforts toward alleviating the distress.

Such caring will help you enter the pain of others. It will prod you to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves in a world of shameful inequities. It will dictate your priorities in spending money and time. It will cleanse you of excessive self-interest. It will discipline your whole style of life, but it will not drain your life of joy. You will be enriched as you experience that holy contradiction of finding your life while losing it.

Life will bring you distress of your own. I pray that God enable you to be "wounded healers." And I hope there will always be people of compassion surrounding you with caring love in the community of faith.

Jesus-inspired compassion springs from a relationship with Jesus as Savior, Lord, Enabler. Jesus had compassion for people who suffered spiritually, mentally, physically. He had compassion for victims of racism, classism, sexism. He also gave scathing rebukes to those causing and condoning injustice. And he broke the hierarchical customs of that time. Imagine what a different story it would be if through Bible history God had been on the side of the Pharaohs and Caesars—the rich, proud and powerful.

Your father led the way in compassion and courage. Shortly before his death he said to me, "If there is a lower class, I am in it." Remember how he always took the side of the underdog—those considered inferior because of race, class, gender? How he regularly visited men in jail? How he would not laugh when jokes were told about minorities? Yet his concern was not sentimental. His gentle nature was infused with a holy indignation toward the causes of injustice—"the inhumanity of man to man," as he often said. He spoke out on these things to church and government officials. And he endured the verbal brickbats that came as a result.

I wish for you that gift of compassion with courage (you might call it tenderness with toughness)—compassion that does something, however small, about the plight of disadvantaged people while calling to task church leaders and government guardians of our systems of injustice.

I wish for you the gift of living compassionately and courageously like your father and like the Man of Nazareth, through a strength beyond your own.

Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus lives in Harrisonburg, Va. This article first appeared in Christian Living *(December 1984).*

LENT
a time to reflect

Marilyn Nolt

Jesus the mediator

by Miwako Katano

The story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman(John 4:5-26) focuses on reconciliation between Jews and Samaritans. Romans 5:1-11 focuses on reconciliation between God and us. In both passages Jesus is the one who is in between. Jesus is a mediator.

Mediation and reconciliation are becoming known to us in Japan. Our conference has had seminars on this theme. I did not have a chance to study it when I was in the United States, but I heard about it and talked about it with friends.

The mediation we talk about and the mediation referred to in John and Romans are different. Usually a mediator will not take the initiative unless someone requests it. Mediation work will not start until both parties agree to do so. Jesus, however, takes the initiative without being asked. He speaks to the Samaritan woman. Neither Jews nor Samaritans asked him to work on reconciliation.

What about the reconciliation between God and people? People were asking for forgiveness and seeking the Messiah. God is always asking people to repent, and God is willing to forgive them. In this sense, both the people and God seem to agree.

God, however, works to reconcile even those who do not know they need it. Although God works actively for reconciliation, he never forces it on us but always gives us the freedom either to accept or reject it.

This might be a cultural thing, but in Japan we tend to wait until time goes by when we have had a conflict. There is a time for everything, of course, but we need to work more actively at reconciliation, just as Jesus did. He even died actively, not in a passive way. We must not forget that we always need Jesus as mediator for any reconciliation.

Although God works actively for reconciliation, he never forces it on us but always gives us the freedom either to accept or reject it.

Miwako Katano, Sapporo, Japan, is a member of the Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee, representing the Asian region, and she serves as the MWC regional editor for Asia. She is a member of Bethel Mennonite Church in Sapporo and serves at the Mennonite Education and Research Center of the Mennonite Conference of Hokkaido.

An Ethiopian foot washing

by Ann King-Grosh

Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. … "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand."—John 13:5, 7

We had ridden on mules, walked, slipped and slid for five hours in Ethiopia through the dense forest on a floor of mud. It was rainy season and unsafe even to ride mules down the slippery slopes. When we arrived at Bogale's thatched roof house late in the afternoon, we were exhausted, dirty and cold. My socks were wet and cruddy, as were my shoes. My spill into the shallow stream had done nothing to clean me up. My feet ached and smelled sour.

We were invited into the house and given corn to eat. We huddled around the fire to warm up. People came and went in the house and at 9 p.m. started preparing food for us. By 10 p.m. we were eating our supper. Afterward Bogale came to us with basins of water, soap and a towel. He knelt in front of me to wash my dirty, cold and aching feet. But not just my feet were to be washed; for 10 minutes my calves, my legs and my feet were soaped and massaged. It was a wonderful feeling both for my feet and my heart. When Bogale finished, I knew the true meaning of foot washing—a gesture of hospitality and honor for weary travelers by their host. It is a symbol of acceptance into the family.

We have been taught that when Jesus washed his disciples' feet he took the role of a servant. We also should wash each other's feet as a reminder not only of what Jesus did for us but of our servant role to others. In Bogale's

Jesus the servant

by Milka Rindzinski

Jesus of Nazareth, descendant of David, is about to begin his ministry. After 40 days and nights of praying and fasting, Jesus envisions his task. The possibilities come in the form of temptations (see Matthew 4:1-11).

Changing stones into bread is one possibility. But if people have bread, might they think all is well? Certainly bread is essential, but we need more than that. Although works of charity alleviate hunger, they can also play down the aspiration for justice.

Jumping from the pinnacle of the temple to allow God to save him from certain death is another possibility. However, Jesus does not wish to undergird his mission with miraculous deeds or to tempt God in this way.

Should he govern the world? Glory that comes with a position of power is intoxicating, but power is anti-love, says one writer. Ambition comes with power and is not detained even if it means trampling on others in order to succeed. Jesus warned his disciples: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them" (Matthew 20:25). But the kingdom of Jesus is not like that.

Jesus chooses the way of the servant as described in Isaiah 52-53. He said we are to serve with humility and obedience, even if it means suffering. "Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life! … One man said yes to God and put many in the right" (Romans 5:18-21 from *The Message*).

Severina is not yet 40; she is a poor woman of African descent. She has not slept all night. In her shack, built from discarded materials, she watches over her sleeping son, Biú, with a stick in her hand. He is down with a fever and cannot defend himself against the mice that try to nibble at his feet. Here everyone is hungry—the mice, Biú, Severina—everyone.

Severina is a victim of the abuse of power, as are many in Latin America. Their hope takes shape to the extent that God's love in Jesus Christ is translated by his followers into gestures of love and solidarity. They, without fearing or exalting suffering, are nevertheless eager to serve their neighbors in need and to intercede for them.

Milka Rindzinski, Montevideo, Uruguay, heads the Mennonite World Conference communications staff and serves as the regional editor for Latin America. She is the editor of MWC Courier *and* Correo *and does translation work for MWC. She is also director of studies for the Mennonite Study and Retreat Center in Montevideo.*

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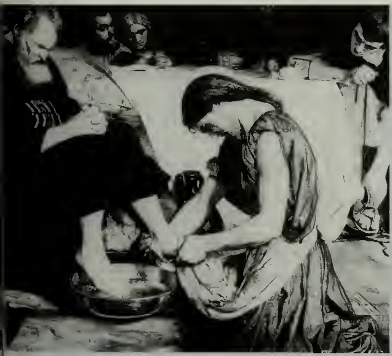


Jesus in his role as the host of the kingdom of God invites us into his home. We are treated as fellow family members, even friends, of the kingdom of God—not as servants but as his brothers and sisters.

house I understood more of what Jesus did for us. Jesus in his role as the host of the kingdom of God invites us into his home. We are treated as fellow family members, even friends, of the kingdom of God—not as servants but as his brothers and sisters.

"I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father" (John 15:15). Jesus honors us by washing our feet. He invites us into his family.

Ann King-Grosh is from Lebanon, Pa., where she is a member of Gingrich Mennonite Church.

East Africans share struggles, successes

MUSOMA, Tanzania—Ethiopia's gain is Tanzania's loss, church leaders recently reported at a meeting of East African Mennonites.

Representatives from Ethiopia's Meserete Kristos Church (MKC), Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania (KMT) and the Kenya Mennonite Church (KMC), plus missionaries from Somalia and Djibouti and delegates from Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee, met Feb. 12-17 in Musoma, Tanzania, for the biennial meeting of the Council of Eastern Africa Mennonite Churches.

Among initiatives to meet the need for trained leaders, the MKC has started a Bible college and two Bible schools. But as a result, the MKC is no longer sending students to the Tanzania Mennonite theological center, which is now experiencing declining enrollment and finances.

Such is the interconnectedness of life among the Mennonites of East Africa. "Your problems are our problems," Tanzanian bishop Joram Mbeba told Kenyan leaders when meeting participants expressed concern about the KMC's delays in finalizing its constitution and in convening its bishops.

Sharing struggles and successes marked the first two days of the meeting as the council heard church and agency reports.

- In the MKC, said church chair Solomon Kebede, dedication is less than during the Marxist years when the church was forced underground and members were persecuted.
- The KMC is planning to hold its first general conference in June, according to a decision by the KMC executive council, which last month held its first meeting in two years.
- KMT assistant general secretary Silas Changru has started a program to help strengthen small business efforts of Tanzanian Christians. Changru said Africans have been misled by teachings that Christians should not be involved in business.

The council also heard about a lack of Mennonite involvement in a program designed to introduce Muslims to the Christian Scriptures. The program is directed by Kenyan bishop Joash Osiro, who recently completed a year of Islamic studies in Great Britain. A number of denominations are asking to participate in the program, but no requests have come from East African Mennonite churches.

At the council meeting, the MKC reported 134,387 members and nonbaptized participants in 218 congregations and 559 church plants. The KMC reported a membership of 26,000 in 50 congregations, although about 15,000 members are in one congregation grafted onto the KMC in the early 1990s. The KMT reported 38,000 members in 71 congregations.—*Ron Rempel for EMM News Service*

N.Y. church plant try shows results

Michael Banks had never planted a church before. But that didn't stop God from giving him a vision to plant not just one but seven in New York's Hudson River Valley.

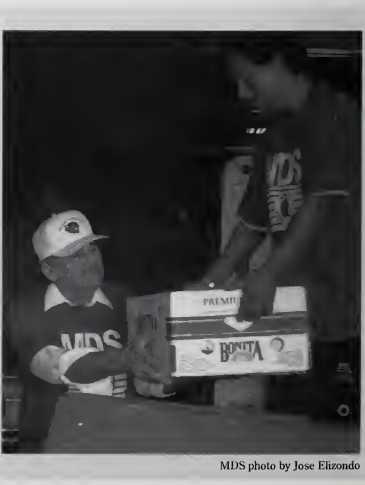
Now after four years of prayer, research, knocking on doors and lots of other work, the first new group is emerging in the multiethnic, middle-class community of Mount Vernon, north of New York City.

"The integrity of the vision requires faithfulness," says Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle, a Mennonite congregation in the Bronx. "If the vision is from God, ... it'll prove itself."

A cell group of about 20 people meets weekly for prayer, Bible study and fellowship. Banks spends two days a week in Mount Vernon, visiting contacts and making new ones.—*Missionary Messenger*

Fruitful MDS response

Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers in Orange Cove, Calif., load boxes of food for farm workers left unemployed by a late December 1998 freeze in the San Joaquin Valley. About 80 percent of the region's citrus crop was destroyed, and significant damage was incurred by the lemon grass, strawberry and broccoli crops. Eighty percent to 85 percent of the workforce has been left jobless. The California MDS unit has received $10,000 from the MDS binational organization and also received $16,000 in donations to provide food for affected families. A group of nine area Hispanic Mennonite congregations have taken leadership in purchasing and distributing the food, which is bought in bulk from local markets and a food bank. The distributed packages also include information about Christ and an invitation to attend church. MDS plans to continue its response as long as it is needed. It will be another two months until pruning season starts, thereby providing employment.



MDS photo by Jose Elizondo

MCC board approves environmental policy, new relationship with Ten Thousand Villages

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Nicaragua's rain forest is called the "lung of Central America" because of its importance to the region's environment. And preserving it has become a priority.

"Since Hurricane Mitch, there has been a large public outcry to protect the environment because people are aware that environmental degradation contributed to the hurricane's destruction," said Susan Classen, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) country representative in Nicaragua.

Now the MCC board has adopted a policy emphasizing environmental stewardship and clarifying ways to address those concerns in MCC's overseas work. The policy was approved at the MCC annual meeting Feb. 19-20 in Abbotsford, B.C.

Under the policy, programs in each country where MCC works will include assessing projects that have potential for adverse environmental affects. Program planning will identify national and regional environmental issues and problems affecting the people MCC serves.

In Nicaragua, for example, MCC will help fund groups building public awareness of environmental issues and help promote soil conservation and use of organic fertilizers.

"MCC recognizes that the best way to avoid the negative environmental consequences is to plan activities and strategies in ways that take environmental considerations into account," said Judy Zimmerman Herr of MCC's Peace Office.

The board also gave its consent to the development of a proposal to restructure MCC's relationship with its Ten Thousand Villages income-generation program. As an MCC program, Ten Thousand Villages' personnel appointments, policies, pay scales, budgets and strategic plans are approved by MCC.

But a concept paper presented to the board calls for making Ten Thousand Villages an MCC-owned corporation. The reason is to allow Ten Thousand Villages increased flexibility in its operations. As owner, MCC would approve the bylaws, any amendments and a mission statement. MCC would also appoint most board members. The Ten Thousand Villages board would then set all the organization's plans and policies.

"Being close to MCC is valuable to [Ten Thousand] Villages," said Yvonne Martin, a member of the committee that presented the concept paper and chair of Ten Thousand Villages' U.S. management committee. "And Ten Thousand Villages gives churches and neighbors a chance to be part of MCC and to put hands and feet to their faith."

A final restructuring proposal is expected to come before the MCC board in a year.

In the United States, Ten Thousand Villages plans for a 17 percent increase in sales in 1999. Sales in Canada and the United States last year totaled $15 million.

In other business, the board:

- approved a $4 million construction project for guest housing and meeting space at MCC's Akron, Pa., headquarters. The new facilities would provide accommodations for as many as 96 people, two multipurpose rooms, other meeting space, recreation room and storage. Plans for financing the project include $1.6 million from capital reserves, $1.4 million in borrowed funds and $1 million in contributions. Ground breaking will not begin until $800,000 is raised.
- approved a 1999 income budget of $46 million, up 11 percent from 1998. The increase is largely due to $3.8 million in Hurricane Mitch-related contributions already received this fiscal year.
- appointed Ronald J.R. Mathies to a second three-year term as executive director.—*MCC News Service*

The best way to avoid the negative environmental consequences is to plan activities and strategies in ways that take environmental considerations into account.

—*Judy Zimmerman Herr*

Ortiz named MCC U.S. director

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. is preparing for a new century with a new executive director, a new board and a new structure.

At its annual meeting Feb. 18 in Abbotsford, B.C., the board approved Jose Ortiz as the new MCC U.S. executive director. He is now associate professor of church ministries and director of field education at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. Ortiz has been a teacher, pastor and overseer in Puerto Rico and the United States and has also served with Mennonite World Conference and the Mennonite Church General Board.

Ortiz

Ortiz will start his new position in July, succeeding interim executive director Steve Penner.

The 27-member MCC U.S. board also voted into existence a new, smaller board as part of wider organizational restructuring. MCC U.S. is shifting more programs, budget and staff to its four regions. The new board will have 14 to 17 members. In addition to members-at-large, representatives will come from the MCC U.S. regions and six constituent church conferences. The board will not be made up of more than 60 percent of either gender, and at least one-fourth of the board will be people of color.

As part of the restructuring, the board ratified new articles of operation, including creating peace and justice staff positions in each region.—*MCC News Service*

Help for those down on the farm

Business training for rural poor a first for MEDA

MONTROSE, Pa.—For many people, the words "urban" and "poor" go together. But not all of North America's poor people live in inner cities. For the first time, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) is addressing the needs of the rural poor.

In January, 17 people in rural northeast Pennsylvania began a three-month course in business design and management through MEDA in conjunction with TREHAB, a local social service agency.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, many of the United States' rural poor are employed but do not earn enough to pull them out of poverty. A recent Penn State study found more children below the poverty line in rural areas (21.1 percent) than in urban areas (18.2 percent).

MEDA previously had specialized in assisting low-income people in urban areas, with programs in Lancaster and Norristown, Pa., and Fresno, Calif. But not all methods that work in those cities are applicable to rural areas.

One problem is distance. One participant drives 60 miles one way to attend the course, held in Montrose. "We found that we can't offer our normal 13-week, two-evenings-a-week course when people have to drive long distances to come to class," says Kevin Stout of MEDA's North American Business Development Program. "Instead we are offering six eight-hour sessions on Saturdays."

Another challenge is marketing. "In a rural area, people can't just go open a storefront business," Stout says. "They have to find other ways to [advertise] and sell their products and services, such as the Internet."

One thing, however, hasn't changed—MEDA still uses local business people to offer training and serve as mentors. "This really gives us an advantage," says Stout of the 12 volunteer trainers and six volunteer mentors. "Local people know best what kinds of businesses will work and which ones won't. They are a tremendous asset."

Eighty percent of the participants are considered low or very low income; all but one are employed. They are receiving instruction in competition, computers, marketing, financial issues, cash flow, record keeping, legal and tax issues, management, insurance and advertising. At the end of the course they will need to submit a completed business plan. Among the businesses being planned by participants are landscaping and lawn care, trucking, woodworking, animal grooming and welding. *—MEDA News Service*

German-language newspaper is 75

From Latin America to Russia to Canada, *Der Bote* for 75 years has kept Mennonites of Russian descent connected.

The weekly German-language newspaper, published by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and General Conference Mennonite Church, published its first issue on Jan. 14, 1924. *Der Bote* (which means "The Messenger") was the vision of Dietrich H. Epp, a Mennonite immigrant from Ukraine to Rosthern, Sask., who wanted to serve the thousands of immigrants arriving in Canada from his homeland.

Over the years, *Der Bote* has included religious content, creative writing, obituaries and information about Mennonite communities, conferences, genealogies and world events. The newspaper played a significant role in reuniting relatives after World War II.

Der Bote's readership has included people in the United States, Canada, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. Circulation is 3,800.

Mexico City coalition aims for church-planting goal

MEXICO CITY—Jorge Rodriguez says church-planting efforts require two types of resources: financial and human. Money is needed to acquire a facility. But even more important are people to lead those efforts.

"We need workers. We must pray to God to send the people," says Rodriguez, director of CUMA, an international, inter-Mennonite church-planting project in Mexico City.

CUMA was started eight years ago by a coalition of the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), Franconia Conference, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Brethren's MBMS International and Evangelical Mennonite Church. Workers come from the United States, Canada and the Dominican Republic as well as Mexico.

The goal is to plant 10 congregations in Mexico City, each with 200 members, by 2001. So far CUMA has established seven congregations with a membership of 470 people. Another 400 people are regular attenders.

Greg Rake, director of COM and MBM's joint Latin America work, says the international teams have been effective in starting the new Mexico City churches. But, he says, "the long-term goal is to build a strong church-planting team of Mexicans."

Two church plants have exclusively Mexican leadership. Rodriguez cites Jaime Dominguez as representing the first generation of Mexican leaders trained at the Mexican Anabaptist Theological Institute. Dominguez and his wife, Margarita, stepped in to continue the development of one church plant after its founders, Carmen and Vicente Miniño, moved to start a congregation in Alexandria, Va. Rodriguez expected the congregation to struggle after the change of leadership. "But the crisis didn't come," he says.

The newest congregation started holding Sunday services in January.*—Bethany Swope for GCMC and MBM news services*

French-speaking Mennonites strengthen ties

STRASBOURG, France—A group of Mennonites from Europe and Canada has returned from Congo with a commitment to develop connections among French-speaking Mennonites.

Seven Mennonites from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Quebec spent a week meeting with church leaders in Congo under the auspices of Mennonite World Conference. In a letter to the MWC executive committee, the seven visitors and 14 Congolese Mennonite representatives said they agreed to develop new and current relationships, examine the possibility of a Congolese delegation visiting Europe and asked MWC to facilitate a network of French-speaking Mennonites.—*MWC News Service*

Judge rules against contributions program

HARRISBURG, Pa.—A Pennsylvania judge has ordered a Tampa, Fla.-based ministry organization which has targeted areas of Mennonite concentration to refund contributions to its "gifting" program. Greater Ministries International has promised contributors would receive double their money back within 18 months based on Luke 6:38. But regulators in California, Ohio and Pennsylvania have issued cease-and-desist orders againt the program, calling it an unregistered investment plan.

Greater Ministries claims the doubling of gifts has been financed by profits from foreign trading. But the organization makes no public financial reports, and most payments to donors reportedly ceased months ago.

Pennsylvania judge Eunice Ross in January ordered Greater Ministries to refund all contributions to the gifting program made by Pennsylvanians since a preliminary injunction was issued last November. Greater Ministries has focused fund-raising efforts in areas including Lancaster and Lebanon, Pa., as well as Harrisonburg, Va.—*Christianity Today*

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MDS annual meeting commemorates busy year

HARRISONBURG, Va.—More than 450 people attended Mennonite Disaster Service's (MDS) annual all-unit meeting Feb. 12-13 to hear of God's victory over the sorrows of disaster.

Last year was unusually busy for MDS. More than 6,000 volunteers served at 11 major projects across the United States and Canada in 1998. Seven such projects were running at one point last year.

"It's important for volunteers, past and present, to come together like this to share personal stories of God's faithfulness at the projects where they served," MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker told the gathering, held at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church. —*MCC News Service*

Hesston College makes degree changes

HESSTON, Kan.—For the benefit of students who go on for bachelor's degrees, the Hesston College board has approved changes in the school's degrees. Instead of an associate of arts degree, the school will now grant associate of arts and sciences (A.A.S.) and associate of applied arts of sciences (A.A.A.S.) degrees.

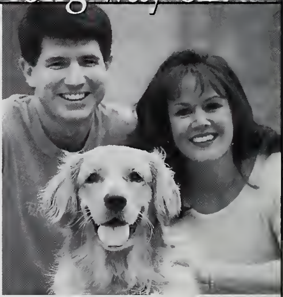
The A.A.S. adds several general education requirements to offer a stronger liberal arts program for students who plan to pursue further studies. The A.A.A.S. is similar to the current associate of arts degree and will serve the school's two-year career programs, such as aviation, business, pastoral ministries and early childhood education.

by the way ...

The first Mennonite baptism of indigenous Paraguayans in the Chaco was in 1946, when seven Lengua men were baptized.—*Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger*

Correction: The article "MVS Adopts Unit in Americus, Ga." in the Feb. 23 issue should have been attributed to GCMC and MBM news services.

Our retirement seems like a long way off.



Do we need to be concerned about it now?

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Births

Bauer, Ryan Christopher, Jan. 18, to Christopher and Donita (Miller) Bauer, Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Bontrager, Meagan Nicolle, Feb. 10, to Diane (Hershberger) and Jim Bontrager, Buhler, Kan.

Clements, Isaac David, Feb. 21, to Keri (Covert) and Marc Clements, Prattsburg, N. Y.

Doell, Isaac Greenwood, Feb. 14, to Heidi (Greenwood) and Jon Doell, Wichita, Kan.

Meyers, Milema Lea, Feb. 15, to Beth and Mark Meyers, Broomfield, Colo.

Nafziger, Ayden Isaiah, Feb. 3, to Charlene (Gingerich) and Darryn Nafziger, New Hamburg, Ont.

Nafziger, Natanael Araujo, Feb. 12, to Izaete (Araujo) and Tim Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.

Shank, Samantha Christine, Dec. 29, to Bethany (Miller) and Greg Shank, New Paris, Ind.

Siebert, Talia Rose, Feb. 3, to Denyé (Rankin) and James Siebert, Omaha, Neb.

Sommerfeld, Owen Mackenzie, Jan. 10, to Brad and Rachel (Schrag) Sommerfeld, North Newton, Kan.

Ulrich, Clayton Raymond, Feb. 10, to Jane (Weber) and Jeff Ulrich, Bloomington, Ill.

Vicidomini, Nicholas, Jan. 29, to Carla (Wenger) and Dennis Vicidomini, Lancaster, Pa.

Wagler, Kyle Andrew, Jan. 18, to Nathan and Tina (Love) Wagler, Kokomo, Ind.

Wenger, Gillian Riley, Jan. 7, to Andrea (Horn) and Cary Wenger, Smithville, Ohio.

Wismeyer, Logan Russell, Feb. 4, to Jennifer (Russell) and Shane Wismeyer, Martinsburg, Pa.

Yoder-Good, Daniel Carlos, March 23, 1998, received for adoption Jan. 20, 1999, by Joanne Good and John Yoder, Wheaton, Ill.

Marriage

Durham/Miller: Jennifer Durham, Ligonier, Ind., and Timothy Miller, Ligonier, Feb. 6 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Deaths

Bender, Dorothy Zehr, 76, New Hamburg, Ont., died Jan. 2. Spouse: Arthur (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Annie Brenneman Zehr (deceased). Survivors: children Gloria, Marlene, Gary, Randy; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 6 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Brenneman, Floyd, 77, New Hamburg, Ont., died Dec. 24. Spouse: Bernice Wagler Brenneman. Parents: Aaron and Catherine Erb Brenneman (deceased). Other survivors: children Doug, Maureen Gerber, Linda Liechty, Gloria Roth, Sue Wideman, John, Dan; 20 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Detweiler, Anna Mary Gahman, 69, Tyrone, Pa., died Jan. 20. Spouse: Robert Detweiler. Parents: William and Naomi Derstine Gahman. Other survivors: children Dennis, Marcia Weimer, John, Ernestine Hamilton, Roger; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 23 at Northwood Baptist Chapel, Tyrone, Pa.

Driedger, Margaret Tiessen, 64, Chesley, Ont., died Jan. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Harry Driedger. Parents: Nick (deceased) and Mary Wiebe Tiessen. Other survivors: children Marlene Toman, George, Sharon Gascho, Daniel, Mary Gascho, Jim; 20 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Immanuel Missionary Church, Paisley, Ont.

Hirschler, Helen Wiebe, 95, Beatrice, Neb., died Jan. 24. Spouse: Henry Hirschler (deceased). Parents: Gerhard and Anna Claassen Wiebe (deceased). Survivors: chidren Hildabeth Lehman, Richard, John; 25 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Beatrice (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Hockman, Susan Weller, 78, Chalfont, Pa., died Feb. 9 of anoxic encephelopathy. Spouse: Harvey Hockman. Parents: Elmer and Sallie Weller (deceased). Other survivors: children Dorothy Halteman, Pauline Liechty; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Holsopple, Carl, 74, Davidsville, Pa., died Feb. 7 of complications from Parkinson's disease. Spouse: Lydia Catherine Holsopple. Parents: Irvin and Lizzie Eash Holsopple (deceased). Stepmother: Minnie Eberly Holsopple Good. Other survivors: children Carleen, Charlotte Holsopple Glick (died Feb. 8), Marvin, Catherine Spory, Carol Froese, Christine Kauffman; 15 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 11 at Kaufman Mennonite Church.

Unruh, Rudolph, 82, Enid, Okla., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Martha Sawatzky Unruh (deceased). Parents: David and Caroline Ratzlaff Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Gary, Roger, Elroy, Karen Turner, Jenell Reim, Marlene; 14 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Grace Mennonite Church, Enid.

Wagler, Ruby Marie Lebold, 77, New Hamburg, Ont., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Stanley Wagler. Parents: Christian and Catherine Bender Lebold (deceased). Other survivors: children Dale, Clare, Brenda; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 14 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Waidelich, Arville Gingerich, 72, Archbold, Ohio, died Feb. 13 of cancer. Spouse: Marvin Waidelich. Parents: Jeff and Ida Yoder Gingerich (deceased). Other survivors: children Susan Lantz, Bette Dahl, Rex, Jay, Lee; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 16 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Williams, Dea, 65, Gulfport, Miss., died Feb. 13 of cancer. Spouse: Sue Williams. Parent: Carrie Reeves. Other survivors: children James, Eugene "Ted," Donna Shaw; six grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Gulfport.

Wismeyer, Luke Russell, stillborn, Martinsburg, Pa., Feb. 4. Parents: Shane and Jennifer Wismeyer. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Tyrone, Pa.

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- **Worldwide Gifts/Ten Thousand Villages/SHARE** has a part-time professional job opportunity as ***education coordinator***, responsible for assisting store's manager with outreach, education and Christian mission projects within the store and in the surrounding community of Champaign-Urbana, Ill.; approximately 10 hrs./week; flexible schedule and hourly wage to be negotiated.

  Contact Naomi Rempe, manager, 217-352-8200; or write Worldwide Gifts, 105 N. Walnut, Champaign, IL 61820.

- **Menno-Hof** seeks ***visitor center manager***. This full-time position carries the responsibilities of day-to-day operations of this popular tourist educational center. Commitment to ministry and good people skills are central. Please write or call for job description. Menno-Hof, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565; 219-768-4117.

- **Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp** needs ***caretaker***: semi-retired couple to handle general maintenance and cleaning at growing camp in south central Pennsylvania. Housing provided. Should have some mechanical ability. Send resume to Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp, Caretaker Search, 5357 Little Cove Rd., Mercersburg, PA 17236; 717-328-3055.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***admissions office coordinator***: 12 months, full-time, bachelor's degree. Skills in office management, database maintenance and computer data entry necessary. Application deadline April 9, 1999. Contact Human Resources Office, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4108; ebybj@emu.edu.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***Discipleship Center director***, Atlantic Coast Conference discipleship center in Baltimore. Position begins August 1999. Qualifications include experience in young adult discipleship and administration. Bachelor's degree and Youth Evangelism Service (YES) or other short-term mission experience preferred.

  Send resume to Keith Blank, EMM, P.O. Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538. Application deadline March 31, 1999.

- **Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship**, dual conference, attendance 40 to 50, is seeking a part-time ***interim pastor*** (up to half-time for two years). Job description available.

  Submit resume, references and letter of interest to John Snyder, 2216 Forest Rd., Lansing, MI 48910; 517-393-0378; email jlsnyder@acd.net. Please apply by March 23. MSU-MF supports affirmative action and equal opportunity in hiring.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a certified ***guidance counselor*** beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. This full-time position involves relating to students, parents and teachers in a kindergarten through eighth grade setting. Experience desired. Penn View serves 560 students in southeastern Pennsylvania.

  Send resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Rd., Souderton, PA 18964.

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- **Holly Grove Mennonite Church**, dynamic rural congregation on Maryland's Eastern Shore, seeks ***youth pastor***. Send inquiries, resumes to Youth Pastor Search Committee, 7333 Mennonite Church Rd., Westover, MD 21871.

- **Hope Mennonite Church**, Wichita, Kan., seeks a half-time ***director of ministry development***. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please contact Search Committee, 868 N. Maize Road, Wichita, KS 67212; 316-722-0903; fax 316-722-5173.

- **Elizabethtown Mennonite Church**, Elizabethtown, Pa., seeks a full-time ***pastor*** and a full-time ***associate pastor*** to shepherd a congregation of approximately 225 members. We are a member of the Lancaster Conference of Mennonite Churches and have an active interest in mission. The congregation's membership is diversified in its interests and occupations. Candidates should have a college degree and the senior pastor also have seminary training.

  Please respond by letter and resume to David Leaman, 53 Woodbine Drive, Hershey, PA 17033.

- **Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania** seeks applicants for a 3/4-time position as ***executive director*** beginning June 15, 1999. Negotiating a full-time role is possible. MHEP administers a program and maintains a heritage center in Harleysville, Pa., which includes a historical library, archives, museum, gift shop, interpretive exhibits and genealogical resources.

  Send resume and references to S. Duane Kauffman, 1411 Schwenkmill Road, Perkasie, PA 18944. Review of applications will begin April 10. For more information, call Kauffman at 215-257-7950 or check web site www.mhep.org.

- **Hesston College** invites applications for the position of ***associate director of development***. Qualifications: responsibility, integrity, ability to work independently, excellent communication skills and understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite church, Hesston College and Mennonite higher education. The associate director of development cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements Annual Fund strategies, coordinates donor programs and manages development office efforts in his or her assigned region.

  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, director of development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8149 or email elamp@hesston.edu. EOE

- **Eastern Mennonite** seeks the following:

  Director and teacher for its growing intensive English program. The director provides leadership, management and some instruction. Qualifications include a Ph.D. (master's considered) in TESOL or applied linguistics and administration abilities. The full-time teaching position requires a master's degree in TESOL or applied linguistics required in addition to teaching experience.

  Field hockey coach to provide program leadership for NCAA Division III nationally ranked intercollegiate varsity sport.

  Appointments fall 1999. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to William Hawk, VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer

- **The Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia** seeks applicants for:

  Conference minister (full-time) to minister to, be a support for and resource to pastors of B.C. churches. The conference minister should also be available to congregations for counsel pertaining to their pastoral needs. Although primary responsibilities are pastoral, the conference minister will also be the coordinator of conference direction and of the conference office. The position will begin Sept. 1, 1999.

  Director of evangelism and church development to begin in July 1999. This person will continue our mandate of reaching B.C. for Christ through strong relational oversight of our church planting vision.

  Any visionary servant leaders with knowledge and experience in church planting and/or pastoral ministry may direct their resumes and inquiries to: CMinBC, attn. search committee for ECDC, 303-32025 Dahlstrom Ave., Abbotsford, BC V2T 2K7.

by Rich Preheim

As the offering plate goes by ...

It's another example of good news-bad news, according to Empty Tomb, a Christian research organization which recently released its eighth report on the state of U.S. church giving.

First, the good news. Between 1968 and 1996, the amount of money given per church member to congregational and denominational causes rose 41 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars, increasing from $349 to $492. The bad news, however, is that the percentage of each member's income given dropped from 3.12 percent to 2.58 percent during that time. And the percentage actually increased since 1993, when it bottomed out at 2.47 percent.

Empty Tomb, which studied 29 Protestant denominations for its report, broke down giving into the categories of congregational finance (for operation of the local congregation) and benevolences (expenditures beyond the local congregation or "the larger mission of the church"). Per member giving for congregational finances jumped 50 percent, from $276 to $413, between 1968 and 1996. In contrast, benevolences increased only 6 percent, from $74 to $78.

Church and state, part 1

Six months after the September crash of a Swissair jet off the coast of Nova Scotia, Carolyn Nicholson is still wondering about one casualty—the Christian religion.

Nicholson is a United Church of Canada pastor who participated in a memorial service at the crash site for family members of the 229 victims. But she and a Catholic priest were barred from reading from the New Testament or mentioning Christ. Similar restrictions, they found out later, were not placed on participants from Native spirituality, Islam and Judaism.

After months of asking why, she finally got two letters from federal officials, including Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who expressed regret for the incident. But, says the United Church of Canada's *The Observer*, the official responses suggest that it was the local organizers that went too far. Yet Nicholson recalls local organizers saying that their instructions came from higher up.

Nicholson is inclined to drop the specifics of the incident. But she says that doesn't mean the issue at its heart—"what is happening to Christianity in the secular culture"—is dead. "Let's name it and talk about it," she says.

Y2K watch: prepared and packing heat

Jerry Falwell says he is going to be ready for the prerapturial mayhem supposedly coming because of Y2K. And don't show up knocking on his door.

In his videotape *A Christian's Guide to the Millennium Bug,* Falwell says he plans to amass "food, sugar, gasoline—and ammunition," reports the *Washington Post*. "Because I'm blessed with a little food and my family is inside the house with me," Falwell says on the video, "I've got to be sure I can persuade others not to mess with us."

Church and state, part 2

Speaking of government persecution of religious beliefs, the Seventh-day Adventist magazine *Liberty* offers this history lesson:

In 1859, an 11-year-old Boston Catholic boy was ordered to read the Ten Commandments from the King James Version. The boy, instructed by his parents not to read the Protestant Bible, refused. The teacher beat the boy until he relented. The boy's parents took the teacher to court, where the charges were dismissed.

Battle for the ages

The 1978 Mennonite World Conference assembly in Wichita, Kan., featured the first attendance by representatives from the Soviet Union. As a result, the event also included the appearance of fundamentalist and anti-communist Carl McIntire, decrying the visitors' presence.

Now 92, McIntire doesn't have to look to Russia or Kansas for a battle. He has it with the Collingswood, N.J., congregation where he had been senior pastor since 1933.

In 1996, elders at Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church concluded that McIntire could no longer fulfill his responsibilities, reports *Christianity Today.* When he refused to retire, the case went to the Presbytery of New Jersey. McIntire withdrew, intending to form his own presbytery, leaving state church officials to rule that he had left the denomination.

McIntire, who is now holding services in his home, promises legal action, claiming he has been illegally tossed out of the church.

Prior to his departure, Sunday attendance at the Collingswood congregation averaged 50 people, although 1,400 are listed as members.

Tidbits

- The National Association of Evangelicals will hold its first conference on the environment March 18-19 at Malon College, Canton, Ohio.
- The first collegiate peace studies program in the United States—at Church of the Brethren-affiliated Manchester College, North Manchester, Ind.—celebrated its 50th anniversary this fall.—*Messenger*
- There are more than 3,000 missionaries serving in the Philippines.—*Mission Frontiers Bulletin*
- The first American statue of the Swami Vivekananda, who in 1893 introduced Hinduism in the United States, was unveiled last year in Chicago.—*Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions Newsletter*

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Rich Preheim

The golden challenge of right relations

Christianity is a religion of paradoxes—the first shall be last, losing life to gain it, upside-down kingdoms, mustard seeds and so on. So in another magnificent twist, it probably should not be surprising that a militant Muslim can provide inspiration for bickering Christians.

A decade ago, Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi was popularly reviled because of his links to terrorist activities and belligerence toward the West. Although he has since been succeeded by the likes of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, Gadhafi has still not worked his way into our good graces.

In contrast among Arab Muslims was Jordan's King Hussein, who died last month. Long on good terms with the United States, he was heralded for his stabilizing presence in the volatile Middle East, with its precarious relations among Arabs and Israelis.

So Gadhafi and Hussein did not exactly see eye to eye. When Hussein died, Gadhafi did not add his voice to the chorus of praises for the king. But neither did he condemn him.

"[I prayed] to God to have mercy on [his] soul, forgive his sins, overlook his mistakes and allow him into paradise," Gadhafi said. "We also hope that Jordan, under the leadership of the new, young generation, will return to the Arab ranks and sever its relations with the enemy [Israel]."

If we want our beliefs to be taken seriously, then we must take seriously the beliefs of others, especially our brothers and sisters in the faith.

In one of the most contentious regions of the earth, one Muslim wished eternal life for his brother in the faith, despite the chasm of belief and action separating them. Gadhafi's prayer exhibited respect for Hussein, even while disagreeing with him.

Can we do that with our religious sisters and brothers?

The landscape of North American Mennonitism feels as scarred as the Middle East. For years we have fought theological and cultural battles among ourselves, making allies with some in the church while leveling attacks on others. Hostilities threaten to rend the fabric of that which holds us together.

It is good, of course, to hold religious beliefs with conviction and passion. Right relations with God demands such. But in that fashion, we are also called to right relations with our fellow believers.

Before we can join to discern God's leading, we must acknowledge that those with whom we disagree are also children of God. We are all sinners just as we are all vessels for the Spirit's work. We must love each other. But while embracing the person, we must also grant respect to his or her beliefs—even though it is easier to claim the former and ignore the latter. Others' positions, if they are built on sound foundations, cannot be denigrated simply because they don't conform to our own understandings and interpretations.

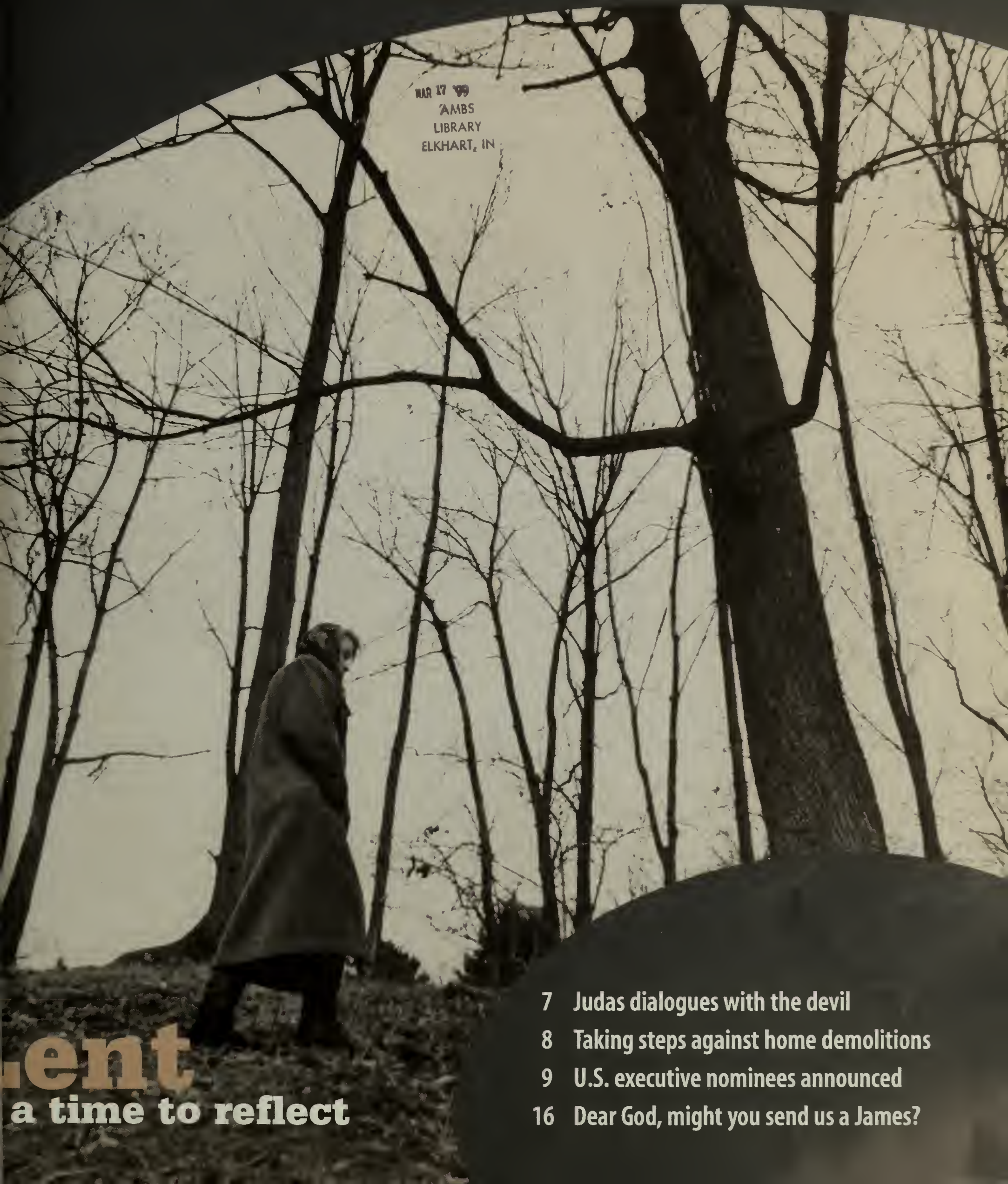
The Bible is filled with denouncements of those who think themselves higher than they should. Vipers and hypocrites, they are called. And we must take care not to join their ranks. Paul admonishes, "We must not be conceited, challenging one another to rivalry, jealous of one another" (Galatians 5:26, NEB). Humility, after all, is a virtue. And it is good servanthood.

What is needed is simply an application of the Golden Rule: If we want our beliefs to be taken seriously, then we must take seriously the beliefs of others, especially our brothers and sisters in the faith. If at the outset we can graciously allow everyone to be on the same level, then together we can pursue faithfulness. If we can't, we no longer have relationships of equals, and we risk name-calling, stereotyping and threatening—none of which is appropriate for Christian approaches to addressing disagreements.

In the end, we in the church may still find our perspectives scattered across the spectrum. But while we take our cue from Gadhafi, let's not wait until those we disagree with pass away—either through death or severed relationships—before we grant them proper standing in our discourse. Otherwise, we limit our ability to discern God's leading—and lose an opportunity to serve our sisters and brothers in humility.—*rp*

the Mennonite

March 16, 1999



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Lent
a time to reflect

7 Judas dialogues with the devil
8 Taking steps against home demolitions
9 U.S. executive nominees announced
16 Dear God, might you send us a James?

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Conference and consultation

Acts 15 gives us the blessed gift of a holy process that thankfully moves through listening to personal stories, Scripture and debate to a conclusion which the church is expected to accept. The settlement does not need to be some magnificent new breakthrough but may be a very practical compromise. A settlement is crucial in order to allow the mission of the church to go forward.

Acts 15 shows that it is important to discern the evidence of the Holy Spirit and cleansing of hearts by faith, signs and wonders. What does this mean in our time? Is it enough that a person is loving and caring? That they exhibit certain gifts of the Spirit such as speaking in tongues? Is it a willingness to speak out boldly for the acceptance of outsiders into the church? Or is a willingness to surrender one's expressions of sexuality or one's deeply held theological conviction as part of the evidence of the Holy Spirit?

I join others in praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the integrating Mennonite Church this year. From where I live, work and worship, a Spirit-guided resolution to our debate seems essential if the church is to be effective in its mission to introduce others to the good news and to participation in a blessed community.—*Carlyle Schlabach, Ganado, Ariz.*

I pray that the March 11-14 consultation on membership in the integrating Mennonite Church will make Christ's highest priorities of unity and mission its own. I pray that from this consultation will go communiques to disciplined congregations, as did the Jerusalem Conference in Scripture, in spite of reported unclean behavior, recognizing them as brothers and sisters in Christ and advising them to abstain from worshiping idols and immorality, letting them work out what that means. Our church needs this faithful minority just as much as we need congregations with other expressions of Holy Spirit faithfulness. God still works miracles in changing minds when those minds observe and heed the work of the Spirit. It would not be the first time the Holy Spirit has led people of faith in a new direction. —*Jesse Glick, Amston, Conn.*

Cutting the fat of unrepentance

I find it sad to see such a concentrated effort being made by the sophists in our midst to include everyone as members into our fellowship regardless of their unrepentant attitudes toward sin. Brent Koehn's article ("Inclusiveness and Challenge," March 2) is a classic example of this casuistic, specious reasoning, which asks us to accept a spiritual conversion without a moral conversion (an oxymoron). Numerous Scriptures were cited, none of which addresses the subject as directly as 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, where Paul commands the Corinthian church, in no uncertain terms, to not even associate with people who have professed to be followers of Christ but live a life of sin. A repentant attitude is as necessary to salvation as preparing the soil is to sowing the seed. Tares in our midst are unavoidable, but let's not help Satan bring them in. Numerical growth without moral conversion is no more than excess fat on the body of Christ.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

Taking a stand

The pull quote on the Feb. 23 editorial ("No Longer Snakes or Children of Snakes") certainly pulled me in. But it is necessary to define what "truth" is being referred to in this quote. If it is simply what we believe is true regarding issues of morality and right, I agree with the position. However, when it comes to absolute truth as revealed in God's Word, we can be sure that we have it right. The Holy Spirit certainly gives new life, but it is also active in revealing the truth of God's Word. I believe the Holy Spirit is an accurate and able teacher. With that, believers can be confident that what the Scriptures reveal of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is accurate, truthful and worth defending no matter what. I will take my stand on the truth of God's Word, the power of God's revelation to overcome my human limits to understand and the efficacious work of the Spirit in teaching.—*Michael Danner, Roanoke, Ill.*

Superpower's faithfulness

I believe Peter Dyck's theology in calling us to not have separate U.S. and Canadian conferences is exactly right (Speaking Out, Feb. 9). However, the implementation is awkward if the agenda of churches in a superpower is not the same as the agenda of the superpower's frustrated neighbors. After three years in one of those neighbor countries, Jamaica, I find that a strong desire of Jamaican Christians is for the churches in that superpower to wrestle with economic policies that wipe out Jamaica's banana industry, paying its United Nations debts, international debt relief, embargoes and the way it imposes its military, trade and drug

theMennonite

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readers say

war policies on nations that have no choice but to go along.

The point is that Canadian churches have other concerns and special opportunities on their agenda than churches in a superpower should have. I don't see it as a lack of love or trust as much as how to be faithful to one's own calling. So if there is a way to stay binational and reap the benefits of that, I would welcome it. But Christians in a superpower have some difficult homework to do that others don't. Answers are not easy, but many lives are at stake as to whether we study how to be faithful witnesses in our own countries. *—Stanley Bohn, Kingston, Jamaica*

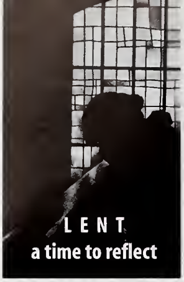
Humility and hope

Thank you for printing "Sin, Repentance and Membership" by Ryan Ahlgrim (Speaking Out, March 2). I consider it one of the best statements I have read on any of these three subjects. It reminded me to view my own Christian life with humility, and it gave me hope for the future of the church.*—Rose Mary Stutzman, Scottdale, Pa.*

Heritage not a hindrance

Some people have stated that not having a "Mennonite" name somehow excluded people from full status in Mennonite congregations. From my experience at Salem Mennonite Church at Tofield, Alta., I have felt the opposite. I have attended two conference consultations with members of the Mennonite Church General Board and had contact with the full board when it met at Salem some years back and have found much acceptance. I have been entrusted with responsibility on the local and conference levels. I do not feel that my Scandinavian heritage has been a hindrance.*—Lars E. Rude, Tofield, Alta.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt



Beyond the flatness of our lives rises the mountain of the transfiguration as a beacon of the future. Jesus opens a window to a different world, letting us share in the vision of God's kingdom.

The transfigured Jesus

by Ed van Straten

Wonderful things were happening on that mountain (Matthew 17:1-9). The three disciples saw a different Jesus, unlike his usual self. A radiance about him filled them with awe.

So deeply were they impressed with what they saw that Peter started to talk about building shelters. He wanted to make the vision stay, for it was a good vision. The radiance of that vision shed a new and different light on the lives of Peter and all people.

But the vision was not to stay. It climaxed with the voice announcing who Jesus really is and ended with the words "Listen to him."

That voice terrified the disciples. The transfiguration gave a new meaning to their lives—as it does to ours. Thanks to the authors of the Gospels, we know that our everyday reality can be transfigured, that human failure and human suffering is not all there is to life.

Beyond the flatness of our lives rises the mountain of the transfiguration as a beacon of the future. Jesus is not only a good moral leader; he is not only a religious leader; he is not only a special Jew among the Jews. He is all that but at the same time more. With his radiance he changes our lives. He opens a window to a different world, letting us share in the vision of God's kingdom. It is a vision of purity, joy and beauty. This vision enables us to live in a world that sometimes makes us sick because there is so much killing, hatred, suffering, pain and injustice. Yet above the plains of suffering is the mountain, the cloud and the voice: This is the Son I love, listen to him.

Let us listen to him.

Ed van Straten of the Netherlands is Mennonite World Conference's regional editor for Europe. Ed was a member of the MWC General Council and vice president from 1990 to 1997. Earlier he was also involved in Baptist-Mennonite dialogue and with the organizing committee for the MWC assembly in Strasbourg, France.

A question of power

by Dave Wagner

We are the only light-skinned people living on our side of town in Bulembu, Swaziland. It is a town built to serve its one industry, an asbestos mine. Expatriate white men still dominate senior mine management. These people, who control the town and live in fortress-like houses on their side, are usually oblivious to the realities of life on our side.

With our Swazi neighbors we live in a constant state of readiness for sudden changes in our living conditions. Often our power goes out, but we never know how long the problem will persist. It could be an hour or a few days. It is the same with water. Sometimes these things happen by accident, other times because of decisions made by mine management. Either way, we never know in advance.

We can cope with such disruptions, but we struggle with some of the mine's provocations. A couple of times our power has been disconnected without warning because "we haven't paid our new bills"—bills we hadn't even received yet. After enjoying rent-free housing for some time, we teachers received letters demanding rent at eight times the rate our colleagues were paying in other parts of the country.

We feel insulted. We have been treated like dirt. The people in power are making decisions that hurt teachers financially and emotionally. Without consulting with us or bothering to check their facts, they make decisions that greatly affect our lives. They seem to use their positions of power to protect themselves without thinking about their Swazi neighbors.

I hope that when we are in positions of power, we remember how it feels to be powerless. Most of us have at one time been ignored by people in power whose decisions give us either advantages or disadvantages. We may find ourselves under the power of our government, our superiors at work, our parents or our spouses. Our tendency in these situations, especially when these people exert their

Dave Wagner, Edmonton, teaches math in Bulembu, Swaziland.

Empty chairs

by Bonnie Leanne Klassen

Bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns.—Hosea 4:2, 3

The blood of martyrs throughout history cries out. They did not seek to be heroes; their deaths were not of their own desire or design but the horrific result of humans' choice to annihilate rather than create life. We honor and almost romanticize our martyrs, but we don't want to take responsibility for our capacity to destroy one another, to eliminate the good and the just, to crucify our salvation. Where is our hope?

"The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people" (Luke 22:2). "Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews" (John 11:54a).

And we have not stopped killing.

Living in Colombia, a country at war, where violations and impunity are common, I knew that it was only a matter of time until the violence would affect me.

When I lived in Canada, I never even hypothetically wondered if a friend would someday be assassinated. Here, the question becomes not if but when.

Among people working for human rights, justice and peace, it is only a matter of time here before those who want to protect the current state of injustice strike and kill.

One night a gunman killed Jorge Ortega, the vice president of CUT, Colombia's largest union. I felt weak under the weight of another fallen companion. For me he wasn't the vice president or a person of status. I didn't even know he was the vice president. He was just someone I had worked with for many months. I had seen him and talked with him every week. We talked on the phone, and he greeted me warmly when he came to my office. He was a down-to-earth person, concerned for his people and looking for a peaceful end to many years of war. He was a friend.

Jorge had been ready to leave the country the next day with his wife and small children, exiled by the death threats. For years he lived under the shroud of death threats, but it had intensified during recent workers' strikes.

Only hours before he was to leave, a gunman shot him in the head. Why couldn't they just let him leave? It's hard to imagine people so firm in their intent to kill.

The worst thing was seeing the cadaver of someone I knew flashing across the television screen, soaked in blood, and knowing that I could not say, "It's just a movie." Who could get used to that reality? I do not want to.

Now I'll go to a meeting and stare at an empty chair, wondering which chair will be empty next.

Empty chairs.

Empty tombs.

"Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened" (Luke 24:12).

I must confess that sometimes I wonder what happened. I am living in a country that mourns and cries out for resurrections. Not having any other answers, I place my hope on an empty tomb. After humans make empty chairs, God can still make empty tombs.

Living in Colombia, a country at war, where violations and impunity are common, I knew that it was only a matter of time until the violence would affect me.

Bonnie Leanne Klassen is a Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions worker serving with Justapaz, a Mennonite Central Committee partner in Bogotá.

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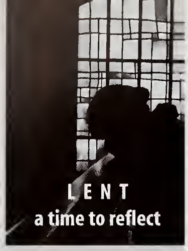
power, is to search for areas where we have power over them. It seems natural to fight power with power. A better solution might be to communicate the power we have and relinquish some of this power to those under us.

This is God's way of dealing with power. God, the most powerful being in the universe, who created and controls the heavens as well as subatomic particles, allowed his only Son to be one of us, a weak human being, subject to the uninformed and selfish decisions made by the people around him (Philippians 2:5-8).

We expose ourselves to abuse when we give up our power and security. When Jesus gave up his power, he knew people around him would kill him. Ironically, this sacrifice has made Jesus the most powerful person in the history of the world (Philippians 2:9-11).

Where we have power, let us consider the feelings, thoughts and ideas of those under us. During this Lenten season let us give up some power to give freedom to those around us. May the freedom we experience when we grant freedom to others inspire us to continue following Jesus' model throughout the year.



Death and life in a maternity clinic

by Sue Klassen

Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.
—Luke 23:28

I was doing rounds on a Wednesday morning when the maternity staff told me about Maria. The previous evening, this woman—in her early 20s and eight months pregnant—had arrived complaining of abdominal pains. She had walked alone for three hours through the bush. Not long after arrival she delivered a premature baby. Two hours later the little one died. Now the tiny body was wrapped in a "capulana" (cloth), waiting for family members to take it home.

This wasn't the first time Maria had had such an experience. Her previous baby had also died shortly after birth, and another child had died of an illness at a young age. She had one living child.

I sat on the bed next to her and told her how sad we were that this had happened. She covered her face with her hands and wept unabashedly. The head nurse immediately scolded her, answering my questioning look by explaining that if she cried she'd have excessive hemorrhaging.

Physically Maria was recuperating normally. She did not have excessive bleeding and progressed well in the post-partum period. The greatest concern now was that family members still had not arrived. Her family knew she was coming to the clinic. Not only did the baby's body need to be buried within 24 hours, but Maria needed food, since in our small clinic the family is responsible for patients' meals. The staff was adamant that because of cultural beliefs and traditions, they could not bury the body. The local pastor and his wife were not available to offer advice. In this hot, humid climate, a decision had to be made soon.

Home: By 1 p.m. everyone agreed that Maria should head home. A medical assistant and I provided her with a sandwich and water for her journey. We helped wrap and tie the body onto her back with a couple more capulanas and she was ready to start her three-hour trek home, in the heat of the midday sun. She headed slowly up the path, alone, the weight of her dead infant on her back, tears streaming down her face.

Premature deliveries and infant mortality are common in Mozambique, but to be completely alone without any family support is unusual. This was the loneliest experience I could think of. Is this what Jesus felt as he walked to the cross?

By contrast, near the end of my friend Pat's month-long visit, we happened to be in the maternity clinic when Fatima had her baby. We stayed with her through the delivery. After some hard labor, a big, healthy girl was born. Fatima wrinkled her face in disappointment; this was her second daughter, and she had hoped for a son. Men are usually not present during childbirth, but Manuel, the father, poked his head into the ward to confirm everything was OK.

Two days later we left Cambine to take Pat to the capital city, then to South Africa. A week later, when we returned home to Cambine, I was informed the baby had not yet been named because I was supposed to name her. I felt honored, but what a responsibility!

Patricia: Manuel said that because I had been there for the birth, and because we'd be leaving in a year, he wanted a "lembrança" (remembrance) of our family. Our house helpers said I should give her my name, so that I would have a namesake here. To give my own name seemed presumptuous. I named her Patricia, for my dear friend who was present at the birth and for my wonderful mother, both of whom had meaningful visits in Cambine. Now they both have a namesake here and will not be forgotten.

Later Fatima and Manuel had their "coming out" party. Until this event, mother and baby are to stay at home. The women in the community were responsible for the program that included singing, prayer and cheering for the parents and grandparents. A big feast had been prepared (as big as if it had been a wedding or funeral)—pork, gazelle meat, chicken and fries, soda and the pink, green and yellow cakes my children and I had made.

Manuel announced the name and that I had chosen it. Her grandfather asked who she was named after. When I said, "My mother," the whole group clapped and cheered. They were honored that I would be leaving my mother with them.

What contrasting childbirth experiences these two women had: Maria completely alone in her most sorrowful moment, Fatima surrounded by a loving family and church community. One alone in death, the other celebrating new life with a party. I pray we find ways to experience the resurrection and life of Jesus this Easter.

What contrasting childbirth experiences these two women had: Maria completely alone in her most sorrowful moment, Fatima surrounded by a loving family and church community.

MCC nurse practitioner Sue Klassen serves in Cambine, Mozambique. She is from Silver Spring, Md., and is a member of New Community Church in Washington.

Judas dialogues with the devil

by Doris Dube

In the week prior to the Passover feast (see Luke 22: 1-6, 14-23, 47-53), Judas found himself looking at Jesus with a critical eye. He loved and admired him, but he could not accommodate certain aspects of Jesus' life. His fame, for instance, caused Judas concern. Judas sought solitude in order to figure Jesus out, but someone dogged Judas' every movement and conversed with him through the voice of conscience. One day their conversation went something like this:

Judas (to himself): Jesus, I wonder if you really are who you say you are or what others say you are.

Devil: And what do you say, Judas? Who is Jesus? Why is he here?

Judas: To me he's just a Galilean carpenter who's got many people thinking he's the Messiah. I don't blame him. I blame our people. They've been oppressed so long they're ready to follow anyone who proves influential. Jesus is clever. He's got them thinking he's their only chance of salvation.

Devil: That's quite an observation.

Judas: Look at it this way. Jesus has been fortunate. God has performed miracles through him. Is that sufficient reason to claim that he's the Son of God?

Devil: You tell me the answer to that.

Judas: Even what he says gets twisted round some other way. People hang on to his every word, as if for dear life. His promises make me sick. "I am the bread of life." "I am the light of the world." "I am the door." "I am the good shepherd." "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "I am the true vine." "I am. I am." I'd say the man is too full of himself.

Devil: You're right. His claims raise him above other men. Why do you let Jesus run the whole show alone? Why don't you do something?

Judas: Like what? I can't influence his doings. I only look after the money belonging to him and us disciples.

Devil: Act, Judas. Act. Force Jesus to prove he is who he says he is.

Judas: How? Jesus has been my master for the past three years. How can I force him?

Devil: Stupid, Jesus is a man, just like you. The difference is he thinks he's important. Don't you know the Jewish leaders are anxious to get rid of him? Help them do it. If Jesus is really the Messiah, he'll fight his way into power. Doesn't he call himself the liberator? On the other hand, if Jesus is a fake, the Jewish leaders will destroy him. If you help them, you won't have to worry about anything

Judas: Why should I get myself involved? Why not let them sort out their differences?

Devil: But you must involve yourself, Judas. You stand to win either way. If you betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders, they'll repay you handsomely. This may force Jesus to take up arms quickly. If after that Jesus emerges as king, he'll retain you in your current office. He'll be grateful to you for spurring him into action. You'll be minister of finance in his new kingdom. How about that?

Judas: Minister of finance? Loads and loads of money? Forever and ever? Why not? If I don't do it, who will? Come what may, I will do it. Now is the time for action. I'll do the nation a service.

From that hour Judas sought an opportunity to discuss Jesus with Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Finally a chance came. Judas thought he was doing a good thing. Caiaphas called other priests and with Judas they planned a way to arrest Jesus. Eventually Jesus was arrested, tried and crucified.

Through the long hours of these proceedings Judas waited, hopeful. He expected Jesus to perform one of his miracles and take over as king. But it didn't happen. Jesus was treated like a criminal. In sorrow Judas tried to see the high priest, but he was not allowed to do so. Everything had gone wrong. As if for the first time, Jesus' words came to Judas' mind, "(Woe) unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed" (Matthew 26:24).

As if a veil had been lifted, Judas realized that Jesus was indeed above other men. He was the Son of God, yet Judas had betrayed him. In great sorrow Judas decided to put an end to his life. Throughout history Judas will be cursed as the man who betrayed the Son of God. I ask you, is there any way you also betray Jesus? Perhaps Easter will be a good time to correct this.

Doris Dube of Zimbabwe is a teacher and Mennonite World Conference regional editor for Africa.

Jesus is a man, just like you. The difference is he thinks he's important. Don't you know the Jewish leaders are anxious to get rid of him? Help them do it. If Jesus is really the Messiah, he'll fight his way into power.

—the devil

Making a difference for Palestinians

North Americans take steps against home demolitions

NEWTON, Kan.—The painted sheet of plywood in front of Shalom Mennonite Church displays belief in a God of reconciliation. The church, located on one of Newton's busiest streets, has erected the sign urging "Pray for Peace" on one side and "Israel: Stop Destruction of Palestinian Homes" on the other.

As the sign shows Shalom's pursuit of faithfulness, it may also be a sign of success. Reports from Jerusalem and Washington indicate that such messages from Shalom's members and countless others across North America are being noticed.

Thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank face the potential demolition of their homes to make way for the expansion of Israeli settlements. Activists opposing the practice say 233 homes were destroyed in 1997 and 147 in 1998, even though the Palestinians have legal claims to the property.

"We see it as one of the most pressing peace and justice issues right now," says Shalom member Joe Smucker. "Palestinian families who have been on their land for 500 years have been pushed off."

Shalom is one of 60 U.S. and Canadian congregations or groups—40 of them Mennonite—who are participating in Christian Peacemaker Teams' (CPT) Campaign for Secure Dwellings. CSD links North Americans with Palestinians living under the threat of home destruction as a way to offer support and to advocate on the Palestinians' behalf. The North Americans are connected with 50 Palestinian families.

Shalom's Palestinian family, Fayez and Huba Jabber in Hebron, saw their home razed Feb. 4, prompting the congregation to erect the sign, a concrete block outline of a house to symbolize a new house and a tent to represent the Jabbers' current living conditions. Shalom has also sent $1,000 to the family to help them rebuild.

"It's a prayer for new building and new homes," Smucker says.

CPT and other organizations opposing the demolitions say they are seeing progress, albeit slight. One of those organizations, the Jewish women's group Bat Shalom, reports that U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright receives more email about the demolitions than about any other Middle East issue and that the State Department is demanding close monitoring of the situation in Israel. Demolition of two homes was recently postponed due to a court order.

Erin Bradley applies mortar to a cinder-block outline of a small house in front of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. The project was part of the congregation's witness against the destruction of Palestinian homes in the West Bank.

"It's very encouraging to know that it's making a difference," says Rich Meyer, North American CSD coordinator.

Campaign participants exchange letters, and the North Americans write government officials and hold public displays to show their opposition to the demolitions. On April 15, Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church plans to join a demonstration outside a local post office, tying the paying of taxes to U.S. aid to Israel and the power the United States has to halt the demolitions.

The purpose, says Pasadena member Shady Hakim, is to give "at least one Palestinian family hope by letting them know what we're doing."

CPT wants to have 100 congregations or groups linked to Palestinian families by the end of the year, Meyer says. The most Palestinian families CPT can handle is 65. That means some Palestinians will be linked to two North American groups.

"We just want to get another family, another church involved advocating on [the Palestinians'] behalf," Meyer says. "We want to continue to involve more North American congregations."

Of course, he says, the ultimate goal is to cease the demolitions. "We think this message needs to come from the North American governments," Meyer says, "and it won't come until the North American constituents tell them that."—*Rich Preheim*

Display controversy leads to insight

Bradley Krasne was offended by the display in front of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. The congregation is trying to bring attention to the demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank (sees tory, right).

But Krasne, a Newton Jew, said the display should also include a protest against Palestinian terrorism. "There's no indignation about innocent people being blown up," he told the *Newton Kansan*.

So Shalom members and Krasne sat down together to discuss the situation. "It was a very constructive conversation," says Julie Hart, a Shalom member who has served with Christian Peacemaker Teams.

It was a learning experience for both parties. Hart says Krasne thought that the only homes being destroyed in the West Bank were those of convicted terrorists. And the Shalom members learned about anti-Semitism in south central Kansas.

There may be more conversations in the future, Hart says, possibly even between Shalom and Krasne's synagogue.—*Rich Preheim*

Nominees for the Mennonite Church U.S. executive committee (left to right): Lee Snyder, moderator; Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect; D. Duane Oswald, secretary; Roy W. Williams, at-large member; and Jim Harder, at-large member. Delegates to this summer's convention in St. Louis will act on the nominees as well as on the nominees for the Executive Board.

U.S. executive nominees announced

NEWTON, Kan.—A college president, two professors, a pastor and a businessman are the candidates for the five-member executive committee of the Executive Board of the integrated Mennonite Church U.S. as recommended by the Joint Nominating Committee for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

Delegates to this summer's joint convention in St. Louis will act on the slate of nominees for the executive commitee as well as on the 21-member Executive Board. Executive Board nominees will be announced later.

Lee Snyder of Bluffton, Ohio, is the nominee for moderator of the Executive Board. She is in her third year as president of Bluffton College. She previously served 12 years as an administrator at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Snyder and her husband, Del, served with Mennonite Board of Missions in Nigeria from 1965 to 1968 and were founding members of Community Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg. They are now members of First Mennonite Church in Bluffton.

Ervin Stutzman of Mount Joy, Pa., is the nominee for moderator-elect. He is associate professor of church ministries at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, and also serves as moderator of Lancaster Conference. Stutzman was associate director of the Home Ministries Department for Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa., from 1982 to 1989 and is a member of the MC Council on Faith, Life and Strategy and the MC General Board. He is a member of Mount Joy Mennonite Church.

D. Duane Oswald of Fresno, Calif., is the nominee for secretary. He is president and CEO of Avante Health, a health-care management services organization, and principal owner of Oswald Associates, which does consulting in medical group management. He served for almost three years as CEO of Kings View Corporation, a Mennonite-sponsored mental health facility in Fresno. Oswald, a member of Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, is on the MC General Board and moderator of Pacific Southwest Conference.

Nominees for the two at-large executive committee positions are Roy W. Williams of Land O' Lakes, Fla., and Jim Harder of North Newton, Kan.

Williams is pastor of College Hill Mennonite Church in Tampa, Fla., and has served as moderator, assistant moderator and district minister for Southeast Conference. He has been a member of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and of the MC Peace and Justice Committee and has been an urban ministry director with Mennonite Board of Missions. Prior to taking the College Hill pastorate, Williams worked in banking for 16 years.

Harder is associate professor of economics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and is a member of the GC Division of General Services and GC General Board. He served with Mennonite Central Committee in Kenya from 1981 to 1984 and with Mennonite Economic Development Associates in Tanzania and Cameroon from 1987 to 1989. Harder is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton.

The Joint Nominating Committee has also recommended the nominees for the Mennonite Church Canada Executive Board: Ron Sawatsky of Waterloo, Ont., as moderator; Jake F. Pauls of Winnipeg as vice moderator; and Joy Kroeger of Hanley, Sask., as secretary. They currently serve in these positions for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.—*GCMC, MC and CMC news services*

Latin Americans: create Christlike alternatives

ASUNCION, Paraguay—Latin American Anabaptists have committed themselves to "evangelizing and forming communities which are true alternatives to secular social structures ... opposed to Christ," even if it means martyrdom.

One hundred forty representatives from 17 countries agreed on "A Declaration of Commitment" during the fifth Latin American Anabaptist Consultation, held Feb. 9-14 in Asunción, Paraguay.

"Today more than ever, the people of Latin America cry out for a community at the service of God's reign, a community in which the signs of the kingdom of God are present," the statement says.—*Milka Rindzinski of MWC News Service*

Right: In Tabeida, a village suburb of Armenia, shantytowns have sprung up since the Jan. 25 earthquake that decimated the region. Colombian relief and development workers are interviewing potential members for a new community to be built near Tabeida. Below: the earthquake-damaged Armenia Mennonite Church.

GCMC-MBM photos by Ron Flaming (2)

Colombians planning new community to rise out of earthquake's devastation

ARMENIA, Colombia—Out of the rubble of the devastating Jan. 25 earthquake that rocked the region around Armenia, the Colombia Mennonite Church's relief and development agency wants to construct a new community for those marginalized by society.

MENCOLDES has received land from the local government to build a community for 200 families in the Armenian suburb of Tabeida. With assistance from Mennonite Central Committee and organizations, MENCOLDES will develop the infrastructure—sewer, water and electricity—and provide property for people to build their homes. MENCOLDES will also help people apply for building assistance.

The housing project is part of a longer-term vision for MENCOLDES, says Greg Rake, Latin America secretary for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), who visited the area last month. MENCOLDES is looking for families who not only might have lost homes in the earthquake but had been previously displaced by violence, are headed by a single parent or had no land or housing before the quake.

"They are also setting aside 10 lots in the new community for leaders—religious leaders, people who have organized sports teams or taken other leadership roles in their communities," Rake says.

MENCOLDES staff is now interviewing families for the new community. A member of Armenia Mennonite Church who is a civil engineer is assisting with the project.

"[Mennonites in Colombia] see this as a chance to create a new community," says COM executive secretary Ron Flaming, who accompanied Rake. "They are thinking not only in terms of buildings but of social structures."

Meanwhile, Armenia Mennonite Church is hoping to repair and expand its earthquake-damaged building. Plans include adding Sunday school rooms and office space. The congregation is now working with the General Conference Mennonite Church's Church Extension Services, which holds the loan on the building, on options for the future. But work on the church is not included in current rebuilding programs.

Despite the damage, the church building has been used as a relief distribution center.

"There have been previous earthquakes in Colombia with higher casualties," Rake says. "What is different about this one is there were so many survivors without adequate housing, needing after-care. That makes what the Mennonites are doing even more impressive."

Most of the Armenia congregation's 50 to 60 attenders came through the quake relatively unscathed. They are now holding church services in another location.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and MBM news services*

Indiana church has 60-acre sanctuary

Like most churches, Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., has a sanctuary, a meeting room for worship.

But Waterford has a second sanctuary, one without walls and covering 60 acres. Pastor Joe Miller calls it a "sanctuary without walls," a way to enjoy God's creation.

The area, which has been declared a wetland, has been used for many purposes. Waterford member and biology teacher Carl Weaver leads church groups on field trips. A cabin on the grounds is used for retreats. Bethany Christian High School conducts environmental and biological studies and also uses the land for cross country practices and meets.

Other people use the land more informally, for fishing, bird- and butterfly-watching and reflection.
—*Gospel Evangel*

Service experience set aspiring teacher on career path

COATESVILLE, Pa.—Some life experiences awaken new dreams; others serve to nurture already budding interests. When teaching veteran James Westmoreland reflects on his experience with a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. youth internship program in 1981, he finds the latter to be true.

Looking for ways to put to good use the summer months between his freshman and sophomore years at Millersville (Pa.) University, Westmoreland decided to participate in the MCC U.S. Summer Service Program, which enables African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Native American constituents to work with a church or service agency in their home communities. Westmoreland's pastor at Newlinville Mennonite Church in Coatesville had suggested service, and Westmoreland thought the experience would at least be useful for his resume.

Westmoreland returned home to Coatesville to lead a club for children and youth ages 3 to 6 and 14 to 18. He met two or three days weekly with the youth, leading Bible studies and planning recreational activities.

Now 14 years into his career teaching English at Coatesville High School, Westmoreland says his summer service stint not only beefed up his qualifications, it confirmed his chosen career path.

"That experience helped solidify whether or not teaching was the right thing for me and confirmed that I wanted to give it a try," he says, because it gave him a chance to be in front of children and be responsible for them.

Westmoreland now occasionally encounters students in his classroom who participated in his summer clubs. "Seeing the kids grow and mature, and knowing you're a part of that," he says, is one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching.

In addition to teaching full-time, Westmoreland serves as assistant lay pastor at Newlinville Mennonite Church, the congregation in which he grew up. His duties range from visiting, counseling and preaching to mowing the grass. He started attending the congregation shortly after moving into the neighborhood with his family when he was 5. The Newlinville pastor offered Westmoreland and his family a ride to church, and he was baptized in the church 12 years later.

Sixty-nine youth participated in the Summer Service Program in 1998.—*Delphine Martin for MCC News Service*

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Conference to focus on new century

MOUNT PLEASANT, Pa.—A March 24-26 conference will reflect on the church's role at the dawn of a new century. Laurelville Mennonite Church Center will host "Pluralism and Community: Conversations on the Calling and Character of Anabaptist-Mennonites Beginning the 21st Century." Speakers will include Rodney Clapp, Gerald Gerbrandt, Bedru Hussein, John A. Lapp and Valerie Weaver-Zercher.

GC budget exceeded for third consecutive year

NEWTON, Kan.—The General Conference Mennonite Church received 104 percent of its budgeted income for the 1998 fiscal year, the third consecutive year the budget was exceeded. Income for the past fiscal year was nearly $4.56 million.

"We're thankful to God and the individuals and congregations who supported the General Conference last year," says business manager Ted Stuckey. "We invite continued support from the United States and Canada for the commissions as they continue their ministries from 1999 to 2001 before Mennonite integration is complete."—*GCMC News Service*

Health assembly to be held March 25-28

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Health Services will sponsor the annual Mennonite Health Assembly March 25-28 in Colorado Springs. The event is designed for health care administrators, chaplains, pastors, congregational health promoters, counselors, nurses, physicians, psychologists, social workers and board members of health care institutions.

Featured speakers will include June Alliman Yoder, associate professor of communications at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Gary Gunderson, director of the Interfaith Health Program at the Carter Center, Atlanta; and Vincent Harding, professor of religion at the University of Denver.

Bethel College gives young alumni award

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Susan Schultz Huxman, a 1982 Bethel College graduate and communications professor at Wichita (Kan.) State University, has received Bethel's Young Alumni Award.

Huxman was presented the award March 8 during a ceremony at Bethel, North Newton. She has taught at Wichita State since 1990 and during that time has received numerous awards for her teaching and research. Among her honors have been the Outstanding College Speech Teacher from the Kansas Speech Communication Association and the Board of Trustees Excellence in Teaching Award from the Wichita State Academy for Effective Teaching.

Goshen College to make Carnegie Hall debut

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Goshen College Chamber Choir will make its debut solo appearance at New York's Carnegie Hall on Palm Sunday, March 28. Selections will include classic sacred works, spirituals and folk hymns. The performance will be a prelude to a mass collegiate choir concert.

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—Lester Glick

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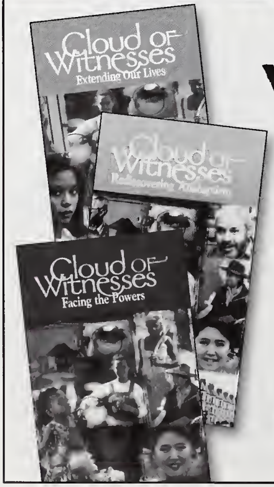

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Births

Derstine, Dylan Joel, Feb. 17, to Joel and Renae (Allebach) Derstine, Harleysville, Pa.

Drescher, Paul Daniel, Feb. 22, to Jen (Herr) and Tim Drescher, Goshen, Ind.

Frey, Cameron Jay, Feb. 19, to Glenn and Lisa (Stuckey) Frey, West Unity, Ohio.

Hostetler, Carissa Raine, Jan. 20, to Eric and Lavonn (Duncan) Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.

Kennell, Logan Matthew, Feb. 26, to Bryant and Lisa Kennell, Eureka, Ill.

Lange, Aaron William, Feb. 20, to Jill and Robert Lange, Valparaiso, Ind.

Martin, Emily Aline, Feb. 13, to Brian and Lynn (Neveu) Martin, Elmira, Ont.

Miller, Andraya Julie, Feb. 13, to Clara (Miller) and Maynard Miller, Shipshewana, Ind.

Moyer, Andrew Warren, Feb. 18, to Diana (Renner) and Douglas Moyer, Souderton, Pa.

Myers, Annika Beth, Feb. 20, to Gwendolyn (Shank) and Robert Myers, Eureka, Ill.

Sears, Aaron Geoffrey, Jan. 27, to Sherri (Hess) and Todd Sears, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Steider, Tyler William, Feb. 6, to Kelly (Fries) and Steven Steider, Espyville, Pa.

Stultz, Shelbi Suzanne, Feb. 10, to Harold and Jennifer (Schroeder) Stultz, Hillsboro, Kan.

Swartzendruber, Kara Nicole, Jan. 26, to Duane and Lori (Bohlen) Swartzendruber, Congerville, Ill.

Troyer, Loryn Frances, Jan. 1, to Richard and Lori (Panter) Troyer, St. Anthony, Idaho.

Wray, Tristan Mitchell, Feb. 8, to Dan and Rhonda (Kinsinger) Wray, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Yunginger, Joseph Michael, Feb. 19, to Janine and Richard Yunginger Jr., Mount Joy, Pa.

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Northeast US *Sept. 27 - Oct. 9*
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Churchill Polar Bears *Oct. 9 - 16*
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Marriages

Baugh/Claassen: David Baugh, Newberg, Ore., and Janelle Claassen, Newberg, Jan. 22 at Newberg Friends Church.

Derstine/Reinford: Amy Derstine, Perkasie, Pa., and Joseph Reinford, Pennsburg, Pa., Feb. 20 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Duerksen/Nafziger: Susan Duerksen, Goessel, Kan., and Brendon Nafziger, Hesston, Kan., Jan. 2 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel.

Helmuth/Koellein: Kathy Helmuth, Arthur, Ill., and William Koellein, Nashville, Tenn., Jan. 23 at Arthur (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Ayers, Wilbur, 87, Bluffton, Ohio, died Feb. 12. Spouse: Ruth Amstutz Ayers. Parents: John and Bernice Lurton Ayers (deceased). Other survivors: children Keith, John, Marilyn Beerman; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Kapadia, Darlene Kaufman, 49, Stow, Ohio, died Feb. 13. Spouse: Shishir Kapadia. Parents: Malva and Irene Edris Kaufman (deceased). Other survivors: children Nakul, Nisha. Funeral: Feb. 15 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Joseph Irvin, 68, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 26. Spouse: Naomi Albrecht Kauffman. Other survivors: children Cindy, Becky Kasper, Debby McKenzie, Sanford, Stephen; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 29 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Landes, Martha, 88, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 14. Parents: John and Mary Tyson Landes (deceased). Survivors: children Florence Landes, Alice Nase. Funeral: Feb. 18 at Souderton, Pa.

Miller, Amanda, 86, Millersburg, Ohio, died Feb. 15. Parents: Emanuel and Dena Weaver Miller. Funeral: Feb. 18 at Millersburg (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Moore, Mildred, 83, Midland, Mich., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Russell Moore (deceased). Survivors: children Stanley, Carolyn Peterson, Bonnie Eash, Sue Roberts; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 20 at Midland.

Moyer, Katie Melinda Nice, 95, Sellersville, Pa., died Feb. 11 of cardiopulmonary failure and atrial fibrillation. Spouse: Charles Moyer (deceased). Parents: Henry and Melinda Keller Nice (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Fretz, Kathryn Hane, Kenneth; 10 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 15 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Nofziger, Kenneth, 76, Wauseon, Ohio, died Feb. 19 of cancer. Spouse: Lois Nofziger. Parents: Harvey and Mattie Nofziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Keith, Pat, Luanne Aschliman, Steve, Sam; six grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 22, Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Todd, Pauline Strickler, 84, East Petersburg, Pa., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Lincoln Todd (deceased). Parents: Abram and Emma Whitmyer Strickler (deceased). Survivors: children Ralph, Evelyn Landis, Jay; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 15 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Unruh, Minnie Ratzlaff, 96, Enid, Okla., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Tobe Unruh (deceased). Parents: Tobe and Elizabeth Ratzliff Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Phyllis Dixon, Viola Friesen, Lily Dunn, Elmer, Bob, Leslie, Claude, Gerald, Bill; 27 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 15 at Grace Mennonite Church, Enid.

Yoder, Jesse, 79, Belleville, Pa., died Feb. 19. Spouse: Lydia Zook Yoder. Parents: Samuel and Leah Yoder Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Delores Knepp, Anna Marinos, Joyce, Judy Heide; 11 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

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- **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich., seeks ***summer program director***. Experience in Christian camping, teaching or youth ministry desirable. Contact brian@amigocentre.org or call 616-651-2811.

- **Holly Grove Mennonite Church**, dynamic rural congregation on Maryland's Eastern Shore, seeks ***youth pastor***. Send inquiries, resumes to Youth Pastor Search Committee, 7333 Mennonite Church Rd., Westover, MD 21871.

- **Eastern Mennonite University: *admissions counselor***. 11-months, full-time, bachelor's degree. Good writing/public speaking skills; can relate well to youth. Application deadline: April 9, 1999. Contact Human Resources, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802: 540-432-4108; ebybj@emu.edu

- **Assembly Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is planning a ***25th anniversary celebration***, Saturday-Sunday, April 17-18. Former members and friends eagerly welcomed. Phone 219-534-4190; email assemblymenn@juno.com

- **Seattle Mennonite Church:** full-time ***youth pastor***. Active urban church seeks energetic, creative individual to expand youth program at Seattle Mennonite Church. Commitment to Anabaptist teachings, great communication skills and B.A. in youth ministry or equivalent experience required. Contact Eileen Crawford, 206-523-2161 or email camila@gte.net

- **Eastern Mennonite Seminary** is seeking candidates for a faculty position in ***church history***. Employment will begin August 2000. A doctorate in the field is required. Competence in 16th-century Reformation and Mennonite history is essential. Preparation and experience in another field or fields of theological education, e.g., historical theology, highly desired. Significant ministry experience expected. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

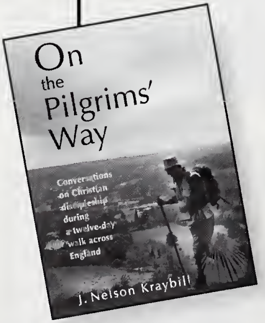
  Send letter of application and resume by April 15, 1999, to George Brunk III, vice president and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **Allegheny Mennonite Conference** is seeking a full-time ***youth minister*** to begin Aug. 15, 1999. Areas of ministry include youth, junior high and children's activities. Mennonite Church salary guidelines will be used. Request more information or send resume to Allegheny Mennonite Conference, P.O. Box 12, Somerset, PA 15501; 814-443-2007; email ALLEGHENYCONFERENCE@compuserve.com by April 5, 1999.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for the ***Damascus Road organizer/MCC East Coast staff associate*** for peace education for MCC U.S. and MCC East Coast. Qualifications include a personal passion and sense of calling to the task of dismantling racism within and strong commitment to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions; willingness to rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit for the entirety of this work; willingness to participate in the Damascus Road anti-racism process and agreement with the nine core principles undergirding the Damascus Road network; experience in group organizing (community-based, church-based, labor-based or in other areas); strong organizing skills, specifically, the ability to work well with a racially diverse range of people in the Anabaptist community, both leadership and laity; envision, implement and articulate organizing strategy; adapt and revise plans midstream; motivate people to achieve new anti-racism goals and objectives; educate groups to the need for organizing strategy; agitate the powerful when necessary; help people gain a sense of their own power; good communication skills (verbal and written); training or experience in peace and justice concerns; ability to use or learn to use appropriate technology for organizing tasks (email, word processing, phone conferencing, etc.); familiarity with urban culture and life an asset. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Dept., or email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org. The last day to receive applications is April 30, 1999; starting date is June 1, 1999. Candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and/or bilingual (Spanish-English) candidates are encouraged to apply.

Conversations on Christian Discipleship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—*Shirley Hershey Showalter, President, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana*

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- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***Discipleship Center director***, Atlantic Coast Conference discipleship center in Baltimore. Position begins August 1999. Qualifications include experience in young adult discipleship and administration. Bachelor's degree and Youth Evangelism Service (YES) or other short-term mission experience preferred.

  Send resume to Keith Blank, EMM, P.O. Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538. Application deadline March 31, 1999.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Bluffton, Ohio, has an immediate full-time opening for an ***associate pastor for youth and Christian education***; 75 percent middle school and high school youth work, 25 percent Christian education administration and program coordination. Multiple staff setting. M.Div. required.

  Contact Lois Wetherill at FMC@bluffton.edu or 101 S. Jackson St., Bluffton, OH 45817; 419-358-5766.

- **Elizabethtown Mennonite Church**, Elizabethtown, Pa., seeks a full-time ***pastor*** and a full-time ***associate pastor*** to shepherd a congregation of approximately 225 members. We are a member of the Lancaster Conference of Mennonite Churches and have an active interest in mission. The congregation's membership is diversified in its interests and occupations. Candidates should have a college degree and the senior pastor also have seminary training.

  Please respond by letter and resume to David Leaman, 53 Woodbine Drive, Hershey, PA 17033.

- **Eastern Mennonite** seeks the following:

  Director and teacher for its growing intensive English program. The director provides leadership, management and some instruction. Qualifications include a Ph.D. (master's considered) in TESOL or applied linguistics and administration abilities. The full-time teaching position requires a master's degree in TESOL or applied linguistics required in addition to teaching experience.

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- **Goshen College** seeks an individual to teach studio classes in ***painting, printmaking and drawing*** with ability and interest in teaching art history survey, 20th-century art history and/or general education art appreciation. Strengths in art education or graphic design are also desirable. This is a full-time, tenure track position beginning Aug. 15, 1999. Applicant must have an MFA (or a doctorate in art history or art education), be an exhibiting artist in 2D media, have three years of successful teaching experience, have administrative skills and enjoy teaching undergraduate students in a liberal arts setting. Ability to teach across media and/or art discipline areas is important. Interviewing of candidates will begin March 26, 1999, and continue until the position is filled.

  Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference, 20 slides of your own work and some images of student work, if available, to Paul Keim, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. Visual materials may be submitted in slide form or via the web. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Goshen College strongly encourages applications from members of under-represented groups and women.

- **Goshen College** announces an opening for a teaching position in ***industrial/organizational psychology***. This full-time faculty position with a view to tenure includes approximately half-time teaching in the psychology department and half-time in the business department. Candidates must have completed the Ph.D. degree (or be ABD) and be comfortable teaching in both the traditional and degree-completion programs. Interviewing of candidates will begin March 15 and continue until the position is filled.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Goshen College strongly encourages applications from members of under-represented groups and women.

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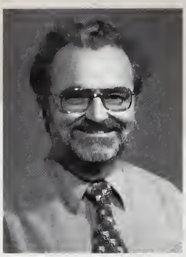

J. Lorne Peachey

Dear God, might you send us a James?

More and more people these days are drawing parallels between what is facing the merging Mennonite Church and what brought together early Christians at the Jerusalem Conference as recorded in Acts 15. At least I've received more letters and articles in the past months suggesting this parallel than I recall getting on most any other topic as a Mennonite editor.

In the first century, the issue was circumcision and whether churches could accept as members men who did not undergo this ancient Jewish rite. Today the issue is congregations that accept noncelibate homosexuals as members. They have been dismissed by one area conference but retain membership in another. Can these congregations be members of the new Mennonite Church?

The first century saw leaders from across the church gather to make a decision. Today we have just had a major consultation of church leaders in Kansas City to see if there is any common ground among us on the contentious issue of membership and homosexuality. The Kansas City findings will go to a membership committee, who will make recommendations to a meeting of the joint general boards in April. From there the issue goes to the delegates of St. Louis 99.

We have come so far down the road of all having a say in everything in the church that to even think one person could articulate a decision for the rest of us seems almost laughable.

Whether or not we agree to parallels between the first-century church and 20th-century merging Mennonites, we might do well to take another look at the story of the Jerusalem Conference. The discussion by church leaders from all over Asia Minor was long and heated. There were sermons and testimonies. Apparently little progress was being made until an elder, James, rose to speak. He summarized the discussion, put it in context of Scripture and then said, "I have decided that … ."

The Bible doesn't tell us how long it took the rest to get on board. But what James articulated as a good decision resonated with what was in the hearts of the others at the conference. What he said about circumcision and other practices was put almost verbatim into a pastoral letter the Jerusalem Conference agreed to send to all churches (Acts 15:23-29).

Would we dare pray today for a James to surface to help us solve our disagreements? The ways we have traditionally used to make decisions don't seem to be working. We aren't anywhere near consensus as groups on both sides say they won't be part of the new Mennonite Church if the decision on membership doesn't go the way they believe is biblical.

We can put the matter to a vote. However, often in history the majority who wins turns out to be wrong while the minority who loses ends up right. Take, for example, our own Anabaptist movement that resulted in the Mennonite church because a minority refused to go along with the majority.

Could we even hope that a James would arise among us? Would anyone dare take the risk to humbly, prayerfully, yet forcefully say: "I have decided that … "?

Should someone try, would the rest of us even think about following? We have come so far down the road of egalitarianism, of all having a say in everything that affects our life in the church, that to even think one person could articulate a decision that would sit well with the rest of us seems almost laughable.

Of course, there are many dangers and risks, both for the church and for anyone God calls to be a James. That was also true for those who gathered at Jerusalem. They were likely tempted to think the issues they had agreed on were settled for all time; that didn't turn out to be true, as evidenced in repeated references to circumcision and other practice boundaries in the later writings of Paul. Nor did James become an authoritarian leader or a revered icon, always a temptation when God calls someone to a special work. We read very little more of James after this one event.

Many today fear the Mennonite church has reached an impasse in its move toward a merger that can include both unity and faithfulness. Traditional ways of making decisions don't seem to be serving us well. Might we take one more lesson from the Bible and dare to consider a James? It's worth a prayer.—*jlp*

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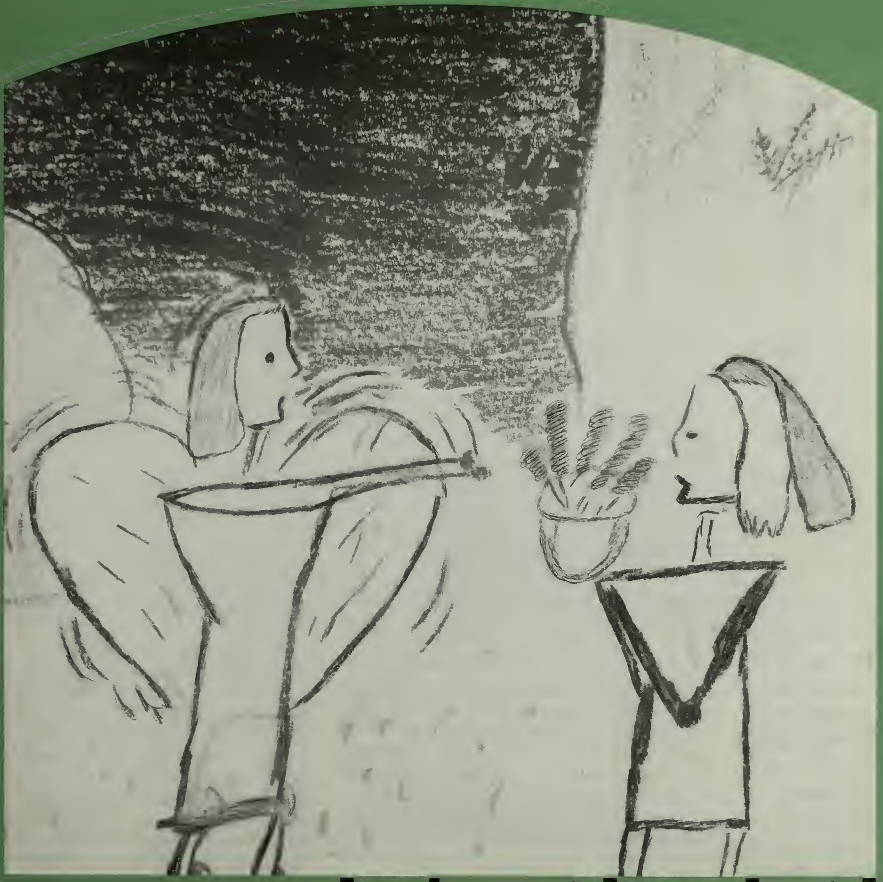

he is not here but has risen

10 What the woman at Bethany knew
12 Little agreement on disciplined churches
16 Despite legal concerns, Iraqi aid continues
24 Easter is to be surprised by joy

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Exploring membership

I'm dismayed by the articles by R. Brent Alderfer and Vern Rempel ("What Defines Us As Mennonites," Feb. 23 and March 2). They represent some fuzzy thinking characterized by the glib use of emotionally charged words such as peace, joy, community, mystery, relationships and wholeness. Apart from their biblical and theological essence, such expressions denote trite, feel-good attitudes. It's a sad day when such subjective emotion trumps thoroughgoing, biblically based, theologically sound discussion.

The thinking is that the old days of bishops and rules were bad, so we have to get rid of everything associated with that era. It's hip to decry plain clothing, strict Sunday observance and other quaint practices, and it's decidedly uncool to quote Scripture and talk about Jesus. Rules? Forget it.

I am not one who routinely cries out the church is on a slippery slope if (insert your most feared event here). But if the model proposed by Alderfer and Rempel is followed, I believe we will soon find ourselves a church full of radically self-centered individuals, a church that bears no resemblance to the group Jesus called to him or to those Anabaptist brothers and sisters who understood radical obedience to the Christ of the Gospels as the mark of the Christian, paying for such a view of the church with their lives.—*Michael Yeakey, La Junta, Colo.*

I wasn't surprised by Alderfer and Rempel's assertions that we should not submit to Scripture—they have to make this assertion to validate their own interpretations (March 2). What did surprise me was their statement that Jesus was crucified for his interpretation of Scripture. At first I disagreed, but then I realized they were right. And I became convinced that rather than supporting their assertion, this statement actually refutes it.

Jesus submitted completely to the teaching of Scripture, even when he didn't like what it had to say. The Jews found many ways to interpret the prophecies concerning the necessary death of their Messiah, interpretations which led them to believe he would deliver to them a material kingdom. How tempting it must have been for Jesus to accept these interpretations. No, Jesus didn't like the non-negotiable, unavoidable mandate that he was to die, as mandated by Scripture. And yet he submitted, believing in and knowing the authority of God's Word.

Do we have the humility to submit, like our Lord, to the truths we find in Scripture that we find disagreeable? Or will we continue to try and conform Scripture to our own interpretations and thus, by denying its truth, rob it of its authority? I pray, for the sake of our church, for the sake of our world, that we will do the former.—*Jacob Stoltzfus, Stuttgart, Germany*

Brent Koehn has done some heavy thinking ("Inclusiveness and Challenge," March 2), but I feel he started with a faulty assumption. He sees the wider church as a hierarchy and not as a fellowship. In a hierarchy, those above can make judgments about those beneath. In a fellowship, we stand on equal ground. From that stance we can challenge and disagree, but we are not given the power to cast out another congregation from the fellowship.

Looking back on the history of the General Conference Mennonite Church, we have joined together as quite diverse congregations. We have never thought alike or acted alike, but we are united in mission. We know that we have congregations that have not supported all parts of the mission equally because of our diversity. While we have passed statements on a variety of issues, we have never done so with unanimity. We may have wished at times that we could cut off those who did not fully agree with us, but we have not given each other that kind of authority and power. Thank God for his mercy.

Ryan Ahlgrim (Speaking Out, March 2) presents us with the foundation we can use to move forward. Let us remain congregational in polity. If we can have patience and love for the "weaker brother or sister," maybe they can have patience and love for my congregation when others do not agree. In the General Conference Mennonite Church, there is no power or procedure given to expel a congregation. And the same is true for many of the area conferences within the Mennonite Church. Let us not move in that direction now.—*David L. Habegger, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Editor's note: While the General Conference Mennonite Church constitution and bylaws emphasize a congregational polity, they also provide for the dismissal of congregations that neglect to send representatives to three consecutive delegate sessions or for dismissal on "other grounds" as deemed by the General Board. A two-thirds vote by delegates is required for dismissal. The General Conference Mennonite Church, however, has never expelled a congregation.

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readers say

In the discussion of membership, I would like to suggest that the truths recorded in Galatians 6 be kept in mind. Excommunicating people cuts off relations for possible renewal or revival of relations.

During World War II, the conference to which I related directed that all members in the military be excommunicated. In the church I was serving, 26 members were drafted: 12 entered Civilian Public Service (CPS) and 14 the military. Our church refused to excommunicate any members. We tried to keep an open relationship with all men. After the war, our church made a welcome-home dinner and invited all the men to share their experiences. Those in CPS shared, as did nearly all those in the military. Some of the men in the military regretted the choice they had made and expressed a desire to be forgiven. In several weeks, the other military men also expressed regrets and sought full relations with the church. Only three men failed to renew their relations.

Excommunication may be necessary sometimes. But the Spirit can work most effectively with a long-suffering and forgiving congregation. We do not win by excommunication but with patience.—*J.J. Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.*

What it means

Thank you for the deeply moving story of Chuck and Bonnie Neufeld ("A Search for Home," Feb. 16). I also wish to express my thanks for the moratorium on letters regarding homosexuality. I echo the wise counsel of Paul M. Zehr in his Feb. 23 letter: "The church will be served well by feeding it material that nurtures it in the Christian and Mennonite faith." I pray that we can together humbly follow God as he speaks to us through the Scriptures, the Spirit and the gathered community as we discern what it means to be follow Christ in our everyday lives.—*Doug Zook, Edmonton*

Cover illustration by Susan Lehman, photo by Darvin Luginbuhl

No issue March 30: The next regularly scheduled issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated April 6, 1999.

Reading and responding

I find it disappointing that there are those who are so embarrassed with *The Mennonite* that they would hide it. I applaud the editors for having the courage to tackle the controversial issues of our time. I would be happy to have anyone read *The Mennonite.*

To many non-Mennonites, "Mennonite" is still synonymous with no electricity, black hats and beards. Surely Jesus placed himself in the middle of the difficult issues of his time as we read of this again and again in the Bible. Shouldn't we do the same with God's grace and Spirit among us? Can we disagree and continue to communicate? Sadly, too often the communication has stopped and splits have occurred, something to be truly embarrassed about.

I encourage communication to continue as it has in *The Mennonite* in the form of articles, letters and editorials. I hope face-to-face discussions occur in our churches and at conference events. Hiding our heads in the sand is not an option.—*Douglas R. Yoder, State College, Pa.*

As a pastor, I feel it is important to keep informed of the events transpiring within the Mennonite church. However, since I am bivocational as a podiatric physician, time is quite limited. Therefore, I must carefully choose what professional and inspirational materials I have time to read. In recent months, *The Mennonite* seemingly has been void of inspirational articles while consumed with homosexuality, integration and membership. What once was pleasure reading is now drudgery, being done out of duty. *The Mennonite* is rapidly going from something I enjoyed reading to a publication read if time permits and may soon go straight from the mailbox to the garbage. —*William D. Beck, Hebron, Ind.*

Scriptural authority, scriptural values

As I continue to read Readers Say, I become increasingly disturbed about the spiritual health of the Mennonite church. If the issue of the inspiration and authority of Scripture is still in question, especially among our college and seminary professors and church leaders, then God have mercy on us. If the word of God as recorded in Scripture is God's revealed word, work and will, then we best embrace it as such. If it's not, then there is no clearly spelled-out objective truth. We're left to everyone's opinion as to what experience and preference dictates. In other words, if Scripture is viewed as merely containing truth but not as God's authoritative divine revelation to us, then we, rather than Scripture, become the ultimate authority. We judge the Scripture rather than it judging us.—*J. Neil Haney, Springfield, Ohio*

We have gone from being a church of strong beliefs and values to a church in search of membership at almost any cost. Satan's ultimate plan is to destroy the church from within. We have seen the problems that are associated with a faith that is not grounded in the Lord. There is a breakdown in the family because men don't want to assume their role in the home and family. There is dissension among church members because men will not fulfill the role that God has given them. Let's not spend our time trying to figure out what is right and wrong when all the answers are right in front of us in the Bible.—*Craig and Dawn Weaver, Souderton, Pa.*

The humanitarian call of the Iraqi crisis

I share Don Schrader's revulsion (Readers Say, March 2) with the disastrous humanitarian impact sanctions and war are having on the Iraqi people. Best estimates are that more than 5,000 people die prematurely each month. This includes old people too weak to survive the flu, malnourished children who cannot recover from pneumonia, babies who do not survive childbirth due to birth defects or other congenital weaknesses, and people who starve. But I think it's not helpful to use words like "mass murder" assigned to one person from one country. We Americans have a tendency to do this. Many like to assign all the blame to Saddam Hussein, which is equally troubling and inaccurate.

However, for people who feel the international Iraqi sanctions policy is immoral, there is something to do. Between now and April 15, a major United Nations review of relations to Iraq is under way. Both Americans and Canadians can encourage their government officials to focus first of all on the humanitarian crisis and give this reality first consideration as alternatives or changes to the current sanctions policy are being considered. It's very likely that decisions put in place in mid-April will stick for a while. And if these decisions do not include some major change in the way the world relates to Iraq, there will only be more suffering. Mennonite Central Committee has focused on the Iraq crisis for the last several years via relief shipments and visiting delegations and can be contacted for information.—*Bob Herr, MCC Peace Office co-director, Akron, Pa.*

Into the resurrection

by Phyllis Pellman Good

As nearly as we can tell, the two Marys didn't get all polished up to go to Jesus' grave. Their visit had the pace of duty, not of high anticipation. They hadn't gotten themselves all primed and ready to receive the resurrection (Matthew 28:1-10).

They simply went, wrapped in their loss and disappointment. They did what they knew to do and what they could.

Never mind that Jesus had been telling them he'd be back. The prospect was outrageous. His death had been so laboriously final, such a public event. He had died on a billboard, so to speak, or on the equivalent of live TV, so wouldn't the promised resurrection be as grand a spectacle? In any case, had the women remembered or expected such a development, wouldn't they have gathered up a group to go along to the grave?

And so the audience was small, despairing and curious rather than big, confident and believing. But it was enough for the story to continue. At full throttle.

Two women in the shadowy light of dawn carry their breaking hearts into a deathly still garden, only to be blasted with an earthquake and an "angel-approach" approximating lightning. Mary and Mary, who've been through a lot of trouble, managed to stay standing, although the guards went down.

The angel messenger spoke to them immediately—reassuring them, not reprimanding them for their fear or too-little faith. They weren't deprived of the announcement because they had come improperly prepared.

Instead they got the full news—and a demonstration to prove it. In an insistent mix of the physical and spiritual (not unlike Jesus' way of doing things), the women experienced holy white lightning next to core-of-the-earth darkness. They were invited to look at the hard and empty hole, then to tell others that Jesus is alive.

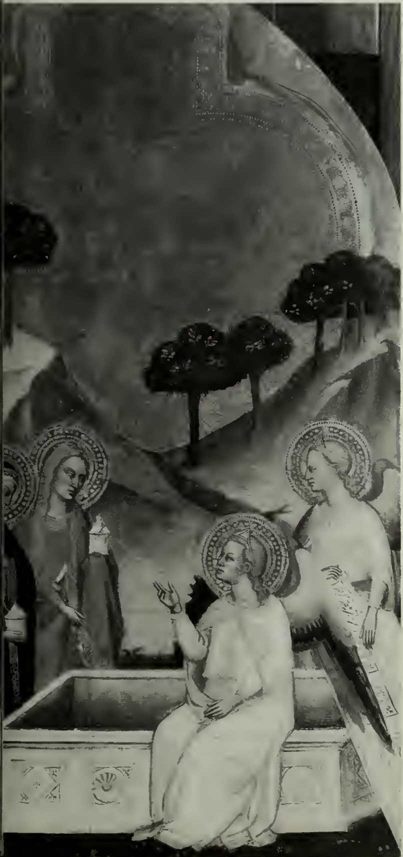
And so the women took off, not knowing that they would run into Jesus on the way. He was ahead of them, of course. And after an exuberant reunion, he sent them on so that they—not he—would tell his disciples what had happened.

Knowing little and probably trusting less, the two Marys had set out that morning to accept the blunt edge of loss, physically to remind themselves that this man and his amazing life were over.

They discovered God—in one form or another—awaiting them. Urging them not to be afraid. Urging them one step at a time into the resurrection.

The two Marys had set out that morning to accept the blunt edge of loss, to physically remind themselves that this man and his amazing life were over. They discovered God—in one form or another—awaiting them.

"Maries at the Sepulchre" courtesy of the Trustees, National Gallery, London



Phyllis Pellman Good, Lancaster, Pa., is communication consultant for Mennonite World Conference and its regional editor for North America. Previously she was a member of the MWC Executive Committee and, before that, of the General Council.

Crosspurpose

A meditation on the cross (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

by David A. Stevens

When you look at a cross, whether a satin-finished work of art or rough-sawn boards and twine, what do you see? I don't just mean two pieces of wood joined at a right angle. What do you really see? I suspect the cross has a benign effect on us, reminding us of Jesus. It is for us a symbol of worship. But the cross did not always have that meaning and that effect. In fact, there are trememdous differences between the meaning of the cross for us today and for people at the time of Jesus' crucifixion.

If we were to take down the cross from our steeple or sanctuary and put in its place something that created for us the same feelings the cross evoked for the people of Jesus' day, we might consider a gallows with a hanging noose. Or we might suspend an electric chair above our pulpits or hang in our sanctuaries a banner that depicts a lethal syringe. The cross was anti-worship. It was the instrument of capital punishment.

Scholar Martin Hengel in his book *Crucifixion* (Fortress, 1977) gives us a sketch of crucifixion in Jesus' day. He writes: "Crucifixion as a penalty was remarkably widespread in antiquity. It appears in various forms among numerous peoples of the ancient world. … [Crucifixion] was and remained a political and military punishment. … [A]mong the Romans it was inflicted above all on the lower classes, i.e., slaves, violent criminals and the unruly elements in rebellious provinces, not least in Judea. The chief reason for its use was its allegedly supreme [effectiveness] as a deterrent; it was, of course, carried out publicly. … It was usually associated with other forms of torture, including at least flogging. … By the public display of a naked victim at a prominent place—at a crossroads, in the theater, on high ground, at the place of his crime—crucifixion also represented his uttermost humiliation. … Crucifixion was aggravated further by the fact that quite often its victims were never buried. [Typically] … the victim served as food for wild beasts and birds of prey. In this way humiliation was made complete. What it meant for a [person] in antiquity to be refused burial, and the dishonor that went with it, can hardly be appreciated by modern [people]."

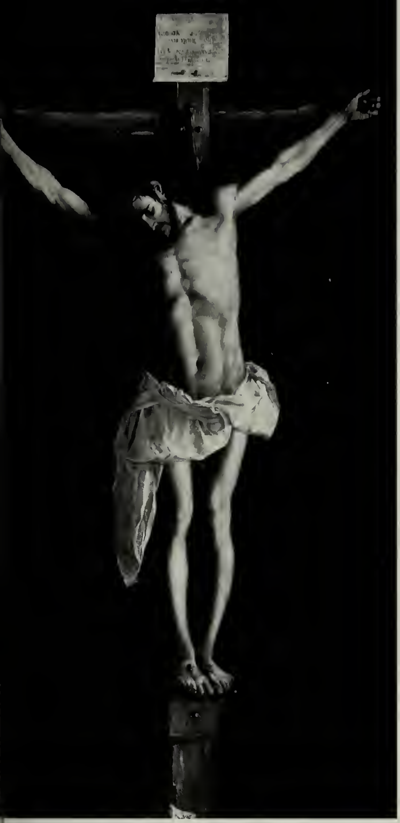
> **The cross was the instrument of capital punishment, the symbol of the power of the state. The cross represented the last futile effort of the world to save itself from the clutches of sin.**

Hengel's study identifies four aspects of crucifixion: First, it was a physically cruel death. Victims usually died from loss of blood or asphyxiation and in great pain. Second, it was a public death, a public execution to be seen by any and all onlookers. Third, it was a shameful death. Not just shameful in terms of popular morality. It was theologically shameful. In Deuteronomy 21:23 we read, "Cursed [by God] is anyone who hangs on a tree." The crucified were God-forsaken, and there was a Scripture text to support it. Fourth, crucifixion was a politically expedient death. The vigil of the crucified broke the spirit of conquered peoples, like the Jews, by graphically demonstrating that life and death were subject to the whims of Caesar.

Can we see then that Jews, Gentiles, followers of Jesus, everyone would have had great difficulty finding anything purposeful and positive about the cross. For Christians who sought to share their faith, the crucifixion of Jesus could only have been an incredible embarassment. Even Paul admitted that the cross was an offense, a stumbling block, foolishness. It was repulsive to many would-be followers of Jesus because it appeared to completely discredit him as a man of God and even as an upright human being. Perhaps that is difficult for us to understand and appreciate. If you want to have others believe in your hero, you portray him as a Hercules, not as carrion for scavengers.

Why didn't the early Christians cover up the cross? Why didn't they silence the fact of Jesus' crucifixion? Perhaps it was just too well-known to cover up, so that they had no choice but to address the issue. But the New Testament demonstrates that the church did not just grudgingly acknowledge the cross as some scandalous detour but in fact as central to the whole plan of God in Christ.

The cross was the instrument of capital punishment, the symbol of the power of the



state. The cross represented the last futile effort of the world to save itself from the clutches of sin. Yet the Christians did not in this instance try to separate church from state but took that symbol of the state and transformed it into a symbol of the church.

Through the cross, the symbol of the state, we understand that God so loved not just the church but the world, even its structures of death.

The church has been guided by the Holy Spirit to understand that the method of Jesus' death is as significant as the fact of his death. "He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried," says the Nicene Creed.

We understand why Jesus himself said from the cross, "Father, forgive them [that is, my executioners, forgive the state] for they [the state] know not what they do." We understand why the apostle said, "We preach Christ crucified."

David A. Stevens is pastor at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Violence is a denial of Christ

by Renton Amell

And Peter remembered the word of the Lord: "Before the cock crows today you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.—Luke 22:61-62

Few of us take time to attend church on a Friday night, so we may miss or overlook Good Friday's message. Without it, however, Easter loses much of its impact.

As we approach Good Friday, we remember Jesus' violent execution and events surrounding it. At the Last Supper Jesus tried to prepare the disciples for the violence that was to come. He said they could not face it down, and he was right. Peter, so sure of himself and his dedication to his master, denied Jesus three times before dawn when confronted with the violence of that day.

Many in the world prepare themselves for violence every day. People living in or near Canadian Aboriginal communities may witness violence on a daily basis. In six months in a nearby reserve community of some 900, three people died by murder, suicide or "misadventure." If that ratio held in my home community, we would have seen 30 violent deaths in six months. The image is staggering.

Unemployment among Aboriginal people in general is three times as high as the non-Aboriginal population, and on reserves it is up to 10 times as high. Female Aboriginal youth in Canada are eight times more likely to commit suicide than non-Aboriginal female youth. The proportion of incarcerated Aboriginal youth in Manitoba is at least five times higher than their proportion in society as a whole. The chance that a 16-year-old Aboriginal boy will serve a prison sentence before age 25 is 70 percent. Violence of one sort or another is much more prevalent in the Aboriginal community than in Canada as a whole.

The kindest interpretation is that we Canadians simply do not see this violence. We are too caught up in our own lives. But the truth may be that we block it out—either because it is too painful to see or because it is too difficult to realize our own complicity. And the cock crows.

Violence is all around us, not just in the Aboriginal community, not just in Canada. The government cuts or limits welfare, passes laws that tax immigrants. Corporations lay off workers despite record profits. New jobs are created, but they pay wages insufficient to support a family. The problems seem immense. We throw up our hands and go about our business. And the cock crows.

Individually we have our reasons for not acting. We don't want to give to the soup kitchen because it perpetuates dependence. We won't buy our food from fair trade outlets because it costs too much. We hold down two full-time jobs so our income will be sufficient for a new car or a family trip to Disney World. We don't take time to establish relationships with Aboriginal people or the immigrant family at the end of the block or the single welfare mother whose son is in our daughter's first grade class. And the cock crows.

Jesus says in Matthew 25 that when we refuse to give a drink of water, when we fail to visit someone in prison, when we do not minister to the sick, we are failing him. Each act of violence to an Aboriginal person is a denial of Christ. With each reduction in support for those on welfare we are saying, "I know him not." Each laid-off worker, each of the fully employed working poor is saying, with the maid who addressed Peter, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." And we, with Peter, deny knowing Christ when we fail to respond to those who are forgotten, rejected, despised, dirty or unloved.

Good Friday's message is of violence seen and violence ignored. We, like Peter, have too many opportunities to ignore the violence.

And Peter wept.

Renton Amell serves as a community development worker in Kenora, Ont. He is a member of Knox United Church in Kenora.

The power of God in suffering and death

A meditation on 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 42-58

by Bishop Ndlovu

Suffering and death came as a result of Adam's disobedience of the law of God. "If you eat of the tree you will die" (Genesis 2:17). This meant separation from God forever.

In Genesis 3 we read about humans' disobedience and fall. Death came, and Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden. They were separated from God. This became humankind's sad condition. Only God could do something to rescue them from this dismal situation.

Suffering and death set in as Cain killed his brother Abel. The prophets were also killed (Matthew 23:34-37). But when the devil gets tough, Christians get together. They continue to speak of God. Throughout Africa many people have experienced suffering and death. Yet the church of Jesus Christ has grown extensively. There is a power that defeats suffering and death.

Throughout Africa many people have experienced suffering and death. Yet the church of Jesus Christ has grown extensively. There is a power that defeats suffering and death.

1. Jesus through his suffering and death gives us a new person with whom to identify: "Since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being" (1 Corinthians 15:21).

In Adam all die (15:22); his descendants suffer death. In Christ shall all be made alive. Those who are related to him by faith will be made alive at the resurrection (John 5:25, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 20:6).

The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26). The power of God in suffering and death is seen in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Christ who died was buried but was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He appeared to Peter, to the disciples, to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time. He appeared to James, to all the apostles and last of all to Paul as well.

2. Jesus gives hope and courage for the future life in suffering (2 Corinthians 11:23-33): Paul boasted about his suffering because he had hope for a better life in Jesus, the power of God.

Here are some of the things he suffered in comparison with his critics:

- He worked much harder.
- He was imprisoned more frequently.
- He was flogged more severely.
- He was exposed to death again and again.
- He received 39 lashes from the Jews.
- He was beaten with rods three times.
- He was stoned once.
- He was shipwrecked three times.
- He spent a night and a day on the open sea.
- He was constantly on the move; this placed him in danger from rivers, from bandits, from his own countrymen, from Gentiles, in danger in the city, in the country, at sea and from false brothers and sisters.
- He labored and toiled and even went without sleep.
- He hungered and thirsted.
- He had been cold and naked.
- He faced daily the pressure of his concern for churches.

In Philippians 3:10-11 Paul writes: "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead."

3. Jesus gives undisputed victory over death (1 Corinthians 15:42-58): Through the sin of Adam, death came as a penalty. That was God's judgment for sin. Sin brought us under the power of death. We inherited death from the first human.

Jesus came to destroy death. He was born and lived on this earth. He suffered crucifixion and died but was resurrected from the dead. Death no longer becomes judgment for those who are Christ's people. They no longer live for the flesh that perishes. The power of God is in them through their faith in Jesus Christ.

As flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, we shall be changed by the power of God (1 Corinthians 15:52-53).

We are encouraged to stand firm in our faith in Christ. We are encouraged to give ourselves to the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain. We share in the resurrection power, and our life is hidden in Christ (Colossians 3:1-4).

Bishop Ndlovu is a retired bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe and a former member of the Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee.

From "He Is Risen," a crayon drawing by Susan Lehman, photo by Darvin Luginbuhl

Easter diamonds

A reunion over Easter weekend brings treasures of friendship and service.

by Aaron and Winifred Lehman

Why in the world would anyone want to spend Easter Sunday afternoon on top of a scorched hill in New Mexico, digging in the rocky soil while trying to avoid the sharp spines of agave, yucca and cholla bushes and straining against the incessant wind with its gusts of swirling sand, giving everyone a bad hair day?

Stranger still was the fact that we were all Mennonites in search of diamonds. But not just any diamonds. These were Pecos diamonds, and this was not just another Mennonite ritual but an experience that would contribute to the bond responsible for bringing this group together every three years.

We are five couples from the United States and Canada who had our first experience together in 1964 at Narberth, Pa., when we were volunteers in the Mennonite Board of Missions voluntary service program. We were all assigned to the Pathway School for aphasic and brain-injured children, which had facilities in Narberth and Jeffersonville, Pa., and we filled a variety of positions, such as houseparent, child-care worker, nurse, teacher and maintenance worker.

Living and working together for a year fostered a relationship that grows over the years, and our reunion is a time to reminisce on the Narberth days. It is also a time to share the joys and trials of life as we progress from being young parents to being grandparents.

Living and working together for a year fostered a relationship that grows over the years, and our reunion is a time to reminisce. It is also a time to share the joys and trials of life as we progress from being young parents to being grandparents.

Each reunion adds its own set of experiences to the continuing saga, which binds us together and prompts us to ask, Where is the next reunion? and, When does it suit everyone? This is not easy, since Jane and Jerry Detwiler live in Goshen, Ind., Marvin and Helen Kenagy near Carlsbad, N.M., Aaron and Winifred Lehman in Slave Lake, Alta., Roy and Mollie Miller in Kalona, Iowa, and John and Joyce Wenger in Des Allemands, La.

The 1998 reunion was planned for the Easter weekend in New Mexico. On Good Friday, the couples made their way toward the Kanagy ranch in the Guadalupe Mountains of southern New Mexico. The desert landscape, winding roads and cattle guards were unfamiliar to most of us, but the sight of the cowboy hat and the wave from Marvin in the Ford pickup reassured us we were in friendly territory.

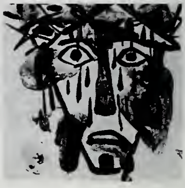
It was wonderful to share our problems and our dreams as we sat around the table after one of Helen's tasty meals. Ranch life was great, even if it lasted only three days. On Saturday we toured the Living Desert State Park and Carlsbad Caverns. On Sunday we went to Carlsbad Mennonite Church, where pastor Amzie Yoder explained that Easter represented a time when God made a breakthrough to humans like the friends walking to Emmaus. In the afternoon, we had a chance to relate to each other how God had broken through to us, and we marveled at how things worked to bring us all together at Narberth 34 years earlier.

After some discussion about which gravel roads to take and admiring the beauty of the desert flowers, we noticed one stretch of cactus pasture that sparkled as we drove past. "This must be it," Marvin said. Helen explained that Pecos diamonds were actually quartz rocks that had the familiar diamond shape and glistened in the sun like real diamonds.

With the wind and sand swirling around our heads, we bent low to the ground and picked at the sparkling rocks. Every now and then someone yelled that they had found the perfect diamond; some were big, some small, some in clusters and some broken.

An hour went by quickly, and it was time to say goodbye. Mollie kept searching long after her hands were full of beautiful gems. It was hard to leave the diamond mine but harder still to leave our dear friends. Next time, Mollie, we are coming to Iowa, and we will explore your diamond mines.

Aaron and Winifred Lehman live in Slave Lake, Alta., where Aaron teaches in the high school, and Winifred is a nurse in the local hospital.



"Veronica's Veil" by Otto Dix, Religious News Service

What the woman at Bethany knew

by Kathleen Kern

For most of 1998, members of the Christian Peacemaker Teams group in Hebron used Ched Myers' *Say to This Mountain* (a book study on the Gospel of Mark) as part of our daily worship. One morning, as I read aloud the passage in Mark describing Jesus' entry into Jerusalem the last week of his life (Mark 11:1-11), a chilling awareness struck me. Jesus knew. He knew when he entered Jerusalem that what he chose to do would lead to betrayal, humiliation, abandonment and death by slow torture.

I finished reading the passage in tears as I thought about the conscious decisions our team in Hebron had made to enter the pain of dozens of Palestinian families facing the demolition of their homes and the confiscation of their land. Over the intervening months I have found myself coming back to this idea of the consciousness with which Jesus entered into his last days. And I have found myself returning to the account of the one other person who seemed to share this consciousness—the woman at Bethany (Mark 14:1-9).

People who were crucified did not have the benefit of ritual burials, so the only thing this woman could think of to show her love and her support for Jesus' courageous decision was to give him the honor of burial before he died.

We know that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a donkey stood in stark contrast to the messianic expectations of his followers, but for the purposes of this discussion I want to start with Mark 11:11: "Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve."

Kind of anti-climactic after all those hosannas. Why did Mark feel compelled to include it? What was the hour too late for?

The answer may be found two verses down and one day later. He returns from Bethany (the contemporary Jerusalem suburb of Azaria—a leisurely hour's walk to the Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem). He enters the temple and drives out those who were buying and selling, overturning the seats of the moneychangers and those who sold doves for sacrifices.

In other words, Jesus planned ahead. The action in the temple was not done in a fit of pique. Jesus chose to enter the temple at that particular time to make people pay attention to how the temple establishment exploited the needy; he knew that the logical consequence of this action could be death by slow torture. He knew that his disciples, once they understood this consequence, would desert him when he needed them most.

Moving on to three days before the crucifixion, we come to the nameless woman at Bethany who visits Jesus at the house of Simon the Leper (notice the company Jesus is keeping) and breaks open an alabaster jar—not a clay jar, mind you—and pours nard, an expensive imported ointment, on his head.

Unfortunately, Christians too often end the account with Jesus' retort to his critics, "For you always have the poor with you," using the story to justify buying something nice for themselves or their churches instead of giving the money to the needy.

But the action of the woman at Bethany represents something horrific, when you think about it. Jesus has told his disciples that he is about to die. The actions he has taken—especially his action in the temple—are going to lead to his death at the hands of the establishment. And his disciples are in deep, deep denial about it.

She was the only one of Jesus' followers mentioned in Mark who accepted the reality of what was about to happen. She knew that crucifixion meant torture, public humiliation, pain beyond what most of us can imagine and ultimately a corpse consumed by carrion birds and dogs. People who were crucified did not have the benefit of ritual burials, so the only thing she could think of to show her love and her support for Jesus' courageous decision was to give him the honor of burial before he died. She was there for him in a way that his disciples were not.

Jesus' fears of desertion were realized. Mark 14:50 states tersely that "they all forsook him and fled." There is no record in Mark that any of the disciples were present for the crucifixion. Mark notes only in 15:40-41: "There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome, who, when he was in Galilee followed him and ministered to him; and also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem." These women, like the woman at Bethany, were anonymous, but they were there. They were willing to face reality—literally the most horrible reality imaginable—when the disciples were not.

And so I wept in the park across from Hebron's il Ibrahimi Mosque when I read about Jesus's last days. I wept for myself and for my dispirited teammates. I wept as I thought about all the families whom we had come to love who, despite our best efforts to call attention to what was happening to them, would lose everything they had so that Israeli settlements might expand.

I wept because I realized that Jesus knew what it felt like. He knew what it was like to wonder what people in power would do to us because of our public witness. He knew how it would feel to fail in our efforts to save the homes of Palestinian families we had come to love. He knew better than anyone why the idea of entering into dozens more relationships with Palestinian families living under the same circumstances made me panic sometimes.

Entering other people's pain is something all people of faith do at times. Most have made conscious decisions to enter into relationships with people facing terminal illness, mental illness, the breakup of their marriage and families and the loss of their jobs. When we do so, we should take time to reflect that Jesus understood what it meant to make a decision to enter the suffering of others. He chose to intervene in the lives of people facing illness and contempt from their societies. And he chose to disrupt the system that marginalized and humiliated them, even though the consequences were the equivalent of a public lynching.

Sometimes we may feel hopeless; we may realize we are powerless to save a person's life, health, honor, house or freedom. In the end, maybe we must settle for what the woman at Bethany settled for—choosing to stand with those who suffer and proclaim their reality to what seems like an indifferent world.

All who consciously choose to enter the pain of their fellow human beings along with that anonymous woman at Bethany share in Jesus' benediction of her: "Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

Kathleen Kern, Webster, N.Y., is a Christian Peacemaker Teams worker.

> In the end, maybe we must settle for what the woman at Bethany settled for—choosing to stand with those who suffer and proclaim their reality to what seems like an indifferent world.

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Consultation on membership and homosexuality finds little common ground on disciplined churches

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—Gathered to find common ground on membership and homosexuality, participants at the much anticipated membership consultation found little agreement but some hope on one of the stickiest issues facing the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) as they integrate.

The March 11-14 consultation, called to provide counsel for the Membership Committee, was driven in part by the question of what to do with four congregations who have lost their memberships in MC area conferences because of their positions on homosexuality (see story, left). All hold membership in the General Conference Mennonite Church, which grants a higher degree of congregational autonomy. The consultation could not come to consensus but generated individual suggestions from some of the gathering's 120 participants.

"It's simply telling us what we knew before, that we have a very different polity between the General Conference and Mennonite Church," says Membership Committee member Miriam Martin.

The most common suggestion was to grant the disciplined congregations provisional membership in the new denomination. Another suggestion was to have the disciplined congregations and their area conferences again work at their differences.

"There's uncertainty as to what the best direction is to proceed that would not end up alienating groups, conferences or congregations in any direction," says Doug Basinger, a Pacific Southwest Conference representative to the consultation.

Because of the membership disagreements, some consultation participants called for delaying at least the timetable for current GC, MC and CMC members to join the new denomination. "It may slow the process down because the level of common ground is pretty minimal," says Everett Thomas, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries president and an MC staff representative to the consultation.

"I would regret if we have to slow this down," says Donella Clemens, who was on the consultation planning committee and is a member of the Integration Committee. "However, we have to work at the pace of the majority."

The Membership Committee will take the consultation's counsel into consideration as it prepares a recommendation for the GC, MC and CMC general boards, which will meet April 21-24 in South Bend, Ind. Apart from the possible matter of the disciplined congregations, committee chair James Waltner says the consultation did not change the committee's position that all current GC, MC and CMC congregations become part of the new denomination and that membership criteria be set by the area conferences.

"There's still autonomy for conferences but also encouragement for sensitivity [for the positions of] other conferences and the denomination," Waltner says.

The consultation came on the heels of concerns about denominational splintering. While the gathering did not eliminate that potential, it did mitigate it for now.

"There is still, what felt like to me, a great chasm, but I'm a bit more hopeful after the meeting than going into it," says South Central Conference representative Richard Headings.

The consultation produced six "findings of significant agreement," including:

- Homosexual orientation is not a sin, and celibate homosexuals can become members;
- Homosexuals, including those in same-sex relationships, are welcome in the integrating church "to share their deepest struggles and find healing and hope";
- Membership for people in same-sex relationships "is not in keeping with the faith statements" of the integrating churches.

Participants praised the consultation for bringing together church members from a wide variety of perspectives for worship and dialogue. "I developed a better understanding of ... the struggles [homosexuals] go through; I developed a better understanding of people who [oppose] the directions that the same-sex oriented person has in mind," says Northern District Conference representative Sharon Waltner.

But Hispanic Mennonite Convention representative Wilson Reyes criticizes the overemphasis on homosexuality. "If we only have two congregations or three under discipline," he says, " why do we spend so much money, energy and time [on] this issue when the problem isn't that big."—*Rich Preheim*

Consultation had diverse participation

Among the 120-plus participants at the March 11-14 membership consultation in Kansas City, Kan., were two representatives from each of four General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) congregations which have lost their membership in Mennonite Church (MC) area conferences.

Ames (Iowa) Mennonite Church, Atlanta Mennonite Fellowship, Germantown Mennonite Church in Philadelphia and Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City all have had their MC memberships terminated because of their positions on homosexuality.

Also present at the consultation were representatives from South Calgary Inter-Mennonite Fellowship in Calgary, which is facing possible discipline.

The invitation-only consultation also drew two or three representatives from every U.S. and Canadian area conference, racial/ethnic groups, general boards, integration-related committees and denominational staff members. The media was not allowed at the consultation.—*Rich Preheim*

Renting apartments, creating homes

Pennsylvania couple sees ministry in being landlords

NORRISTOWN, Pa.—Can a person be a pastor and a landlord? Luke and Dorothy Beidler's friends didn't think so.

In 1996, Luke, an associate pastor at New Life/Nueva Vida Mennonite Church in Norristown, Pa., and Dorothy, a semiretired teacher, decided to buy the apartment building next to the church.

"You're not tough enough to be a landlord," the Beidlers were told. "You're too compassionate. Landlords sometimes have to evict people—how are you going to do that?"

The Beidlers are finding out. They recently began the process of evicting their first tenant, a person with a drinking problem who had let his apartment—and his life—deteriorate to the point that he couldn't live there anymore.

"It feels like a failure," Dorothy says. "He's very angry with us. But he needs help—he needs to go to rehab. The loving thing to do is to say, 'You can't stay here anymore.' "

The Beidlers bought the building, called the Swede Street Home Apartments, a year after arriving in Norristown. They had come to the community, located 12 miles northwest of Philadelphia, so Luke could serve part-time as associate pastor at the interracial inner-city congregation. The Beidlers had previously served in Vietnam and Indonesia as missionaries and with Mennonite Central Committee. From 1985 to 1995, Luke was missions director for Franconia Conference.

When the Beidlers decided to buy the building, Luke enrolled in the Mennonite Economic Development Associates-supported ASSETS program for entrepreneurs, which operates out of the New Life church building. The program helped the Beidlers with business issues and to define their vision for the apartment building.

"We see being a landlord as a ministry," Luke says. "It also happens to help us pay the bills."

But what happens when there's a conflict between ministry and paying the bills? After all, the Beidlers had to take out a loan to buy the building. The bank wants its payments on time. What if tenants don't pay?

It helps that the Beidlers live in the building. "We aren't absentee landlords," Dorothy says. "It's our home, too."

They share their home with 16 other tenants, all of whom are low-income or on social assistance. The 14 modest efficiency apartments rent for $290 to $385 a month. More than half the residents are people of color.

The Beidlers have found creative ways to encourage tenants to leave without resorting to eviction. "When we bought the building, four of the tenants were into drugs or dealing drugs," Luke says. "We convinced them it would be better to leave voluntarily rather than be forcibly evicted."

MEDA photo by John Longhurst

Luke and Dorothy Beidler bought an apartment building three years ago after moving to Norristown, Pa. Being landlords helps pay the bills, they say, but it has also provided opportunities for helping their tenants.

One of the creative ways they found to deal with unpaid rent was to forgive the debt if chronic defaulters would simply leave. "We took some losses, but it's made the building a better place to live," Luke says. The Beidlers even bought one tenant a one-way bus ticket to California when he said that was the only place he could find somewhere to live.

Sometimes tenants aren't able to pay the rent on time. "We try to go the extra mile, work out a payment plan," Luke says. "We talk about how far we are willing to go but also where the boundary is before we have to act.

"Sometimes we offer incentives, like lowering the rent if they pay on time."

This may not always be the best business decision, but Dorothy says, "We're trying to create a home here—not just run an apartment building."

Tenants are welcome to stop by and visit, and for Thanksgiving the Beidlers invited all the residents to join them in their own apartment for a meal. Dorothy has developed special relationships with three women, taking time to listen to them and provide various kinds of support. The Beidlers have told the state they will take people with various handicaps; eight tenants have disabilities, including one whose lack of fine motor skills will require them to help him clean his apartment.

The Beidlers hope the tenants see them as caring landlords. Their efforts must be working; last year, for the first time, there was no turnover. Says Luke. "It's nice to be able to always say there's no vacancy."—*MEDA News Service*

We aren't absentee landlords. It's our home, too.

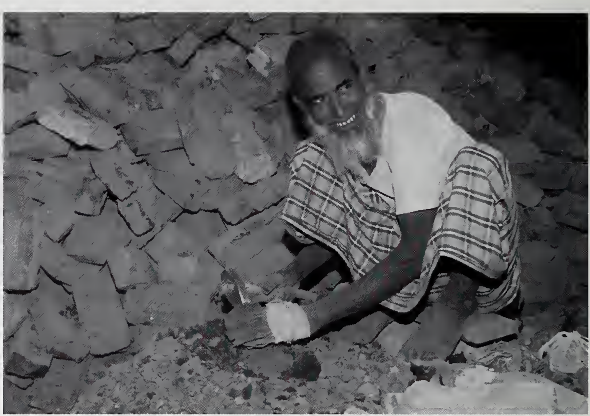
—Dorothy Beidler

Merger presses on with new directory

The first joint directory for the integrating Mennonite Church has rolled off the press. The 339-page *Mennonite Directory* replaces the General Conference Mennonite Church *Handbook of Information,* Mennonite Church *Mennonite Yearbook* and Conference of Mennonites in Canada *Directory.*

The book, which lists all member congregations, boards, staff members and related organizations, is available from all Faith & Life and Provident bookstores.—*GCMC-MC-CMC news services*

Earning the equivalent of $1.60 per day, Bangladeshi Ashok Biswas breaks bricks with a hammer. The resulting gravel will be mixed with sand and cement to make concrete pillars to rebuild houses destroyed by Bangladesh's 1998 floods. The country, located on a river delta, has no stones. So bricks are made and then broken to create building materials. Mennonite Central Committee has committed $500,000 for flood-response projects but has received only about one-fourth of the needed funds.



MCC photo by Jim King

Lots of work but little attention

With MCC help, Bangladeshis rebuilding after flood

DHAKA, Bangladesh—It's Khalil Ullah's first wheat crop, and he nurtures it carefully. He even rises before dawn to drag a string across the top of the plants to knock off the dew so it can water the roots instead of evaporating in the intense sun.

"I'll feed my family with this crop," Ullah says with pride.

In that same field last fall, monsoon-spawned flood waters stood for more than two months, rotting the rice which Ullah normally plants. The flooding destroyed nearly 2 million acres of crops across Bangladesh, and farmers are still struggling to recover.

The seeds for Ullah's wheat crop—which will be harvested this month—came from Mennonite Central Committee and was part of the organization's $500,000 flood response. MCC has also organized food-for-work projects and rebuilt houses after initially providing relief aid for stranded families.

But MCC has received only a quarter of the funds needed for its Bangladesh response as Hurricane Mitch has overshadowed the deluge and destruction halfway around the world.

Crop losses mean difficult choices—with sometimes deadly consequences. It can mean eating less, which in turn makes people more vulnerable to illness and gives them less strength for work. Money lenders may charge 100 percent interest or more. If another disaster strikes, farmers may have to sell their land, thus dooming their children to even worse poverty. They could move to the capital city of Dhaka and join the throngs of beggars.

After the flood, Shana Buddin couldn't find any work and had to borrow money from neighbors. "I'll have to work extra hard to repay my debt," he says.

He now earns MCC wheat in a food-for-work project constructing an embankment 25 feet long and six feet high to protect fields from future floods. The project draws an average of 300 men a day, but some days that number jumps to 1,000.

Meanwhile, 182 Bangladeshi women who craft paper and other items for sale in Ten Thousand Villages stores are getting a boost in rebuilding their flood-damaged homes. U.S. and Canadian Ten Thousand Villages stores have raised $18,000 for a loan fund for the women to build houses reinforced with concrete pillars cemented into the ground and topped with corrugated tin roofs. Many of the previous houses were made of bamboo, which rotted after several years and sank into the soft soil.

The loan fund will enable each woman to borrow as much as $160 interest free for five years. "The producers are so excited about their new houses," says Lincoln Imran, a Bangladeshi who serves with MCC.

The Dayton, Va., Ten Thousand Villages store contributed money equivalent to their proceeds from the 1998 Virginia relief sale. "Our store opened about five years ago, and now that we are beginning to show a profit, our board felt we should give something back to the artisans," says store manager Kim Showalter. "After all, that is why we're here, to serve."—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

Bangladeshis, Kenyans share ideas

The water hyacinth has become an environmental and economic danger in East Africa, choking Lake Victoria and harming fishing, navigation, irrigation, dams and more.

But in Bangladesh, people have lived with the weed for years and have discovered it has some value. With Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assistance, a number of Bangladeshi groups have started manufacturing paper, furniture and other products out of water hyacinth fibers.

Now MCC has helped Bangladeshis share their expertise with Kenyans. The result has been the development of a Kenyan organization which also makes paper and furniture from water hyacinth fibers. Exchange visits are planned between Bangladeshi and Kenyan artisans.—*MCC News Service*

Back in the United States, missionary children struggle with forced departure from assignment

GOSHEN, Ind.—Joanna, Rebekah, Andy and Jonathan Shenk had 10 days to process their family's sudden need to leave Bookhnog, the village in Dagestan they had called home for more than two years. Three months later, they continue to try to understand.

On Dec. 19, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers Alice and Phil Shenk and their four children learned that the government of the autonomous Russian republic of Dagestan would no longer renew foreign visas because of the kidnapping of several mission workers from the region and the violence in neighboring Chechnya. The Shenks had 10 days to say farewells to their friends before leaving for the United States, not knowing when or if they will return.

Now in Goshen, Ind., the four Shenk siblings immerse themselves in North American life once again, but their friends and their memories of leaving are never far from their thoughts.

For 16-year-old Joanna, the hardest part is not knowing when she will see her friends again. "Some of my friends were just starting to understand about Jesus," she says. "I had so many things to tell them."

Joanna also speaks of her dreams for the English students she helped her father to teach. "Why am I here when I was needed there?" she asks.

Rebekah, 13, says that more than anything else, she misses their lifestyle in Dagestan. "We lived close to nature, and I liked that," she says. "We lived at a slow pace."

Rebekah's skills in washing clothes and raising chickens were noticed in Bookhnog. To the amazement of village friends, the chickens under her care even laid eggs during the winter. Rebekah also mastered the dancelike step women use to scrub clothes with their bare feet.

Andy, 11, takes a realistic approach to the family's sudden change in plans. "It's what happened," he says, and the family has learned to deal with it. Still, leaving was hard, Andy says, and "the bad outweighed the good."

Jonathan, an energetic 8-year-old, misses going on hikes in the mountainous region around Bookhnog. When he saw Andy and Rebekah crying the day the news of their forced departure came, he says he wondered at first if they had been peeling onions. Then he learned the reason for their tears and became "really sad" that he had to leave his friends, chickens and cats, he says. Jonathan would like to "write a little story" so he will remember his feelings about leaving.

But Andy and Jonathan agree that there are two good reasons to be in Indiana: Deborah and Nathan, their eldest siblings. Deborah is a sophomore at Taylor University in Upland, and Nathan is a senior at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen.

Nathan once again lives with his family in a house the Shenks describe as a gift from God. More than 35 families from area Mennonite congregations donated furniture and other household items for the Shenks' temporary home. One family even gave them a dog.

Nathan says it has been good to live with his family again, but he also knows the months since they left Dagestan have been hard for them. The Shenks, who left behind one new believer and many seekers, want to return as soon as possible to the place where they left pieces of their hearts.

Meanwhile, the people of Bookhnog miss the Shenks, too. Phil translates the first letter the family received since leaving Dagestan: "When we returned [from the airport] without you, our youngest son cried and said, 'Where are Jonathan and Andy?' And I calmed him down by saying that they'll soon come back."

The Shenks hope so.—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

> Some of my friends were just starting to understand about Jesus. I had so many things to tell them.
>
> *—Joanna Shenk*

GCMC photo by Abe Bergen

California blessing

Commission on Education staff member Ken Hawkley (left) and Florence Njoku, a member of Los Angeles Faith Chapel, share a blessing of "living water" during a worship service in Los Angeles. Hawkley and three other staff members from COE and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries visited Southern California Feb. 19-20 for a series of Christian education training sessions for mostly non-Anglo congregations. Issues addressed included use of prayer and storytelling, youth and bivocational congregational staff.

MCC board: continue Iraqi assistance, witness despite possibility of legal ramifications

This is an act of civil disobedience. But it is warranted to show the Iraqi people that they are our neighbors.

—George Richert

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Refusing to let the U.S. government impede its relations with Iraq, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) board has reaffirmed a decision to continue sending delegations and relief supplies to the sanctions-strapped country, even though doing so could result in penalties against the agency.

MCC has shipped items such as medicines, bandages and school supplies to Iraq with the permission of the U.S. government and the United Nations Sanctions Committee. But MCC has also sent three delegations, which have included eight Americans, to Iraq. U.S. citizens are, in most cases, prohibited from traveling to that country. The most recent delegation returned March 12. MCC on several occasions has also provided leukemia medicines bought in Jordan to hospitals in Baghdad and Karbala. Such action is also prohibited by U.N. sanctions.

"It is technically possible we could receive a notice of being in violation of the sanctions regime," Judy Zimmerman Herr of the MCC Peace Office told the board at its Feb. 19-20 meeting in Abbotsford. "We don't expect it, but we want the board to be aware of this. And we will continue advocacy to end sanctions. In doing that we will continue to include U.S. citizens even though there is a restriction. We assume that responsibility. We will continue to focus on the human issue there."

Jubilee Partners, another organization working to bring to light the suffering caused by international sanctions on Iraq, was notified by the U.S. Department of the Treasury in January that it may be in violation of government orders banning travel by U.S. citizens to Iraq and the unauthorized transfer of medicines to Iraqi hospitals, and may be fined. Penalties could range from $275,000 to $1 million and/or 12 years in prison.

The MCC board approved a statement recognizing and accepting the implications of violating U.S. and U.N. sanctions restrictions. "MCC will continue to sponsor visiting delegations as that fits our larger program objective and will overlook the restrictions placed on U.S. citizens," the statement says. "Personal relationships and human connections are central to the mission of MCC, and decision authority on this should not be assigned uncritically to a government entity."

"This is an act of civil disobedience," said board member George Richert. "But it is warranted to show the Iraqi people that they are our neighbors."

MCC photo by Pearl Sensenig

An Iraqi man browses through used books at a weekly sidewalk book market in Baghdad. In the English-language section, all the books, including medical textbooks, were copyrighted 1985 and earlier. Iraqis suffering under United Nations sanctions since the Persian Gulf War have turned to selling personal possessions for income.

He reminded the board that MCC earlier sent relief and education supplies to Laos and Vietnam during the Vietnam War despite U.S. restrictions. "The Vietnamese remembered that, and we were one of the first nongovernmental organizations allowed back after the war was over," Richert said. "Civil disobedience is not outside the call of Christ."

Richert is a Canadian who has visited Iraq. Canadian citizens are not bound by the same restrictions as U.S. citizens.

The board-approved statement also says: "MCC will continue to consider humanitarian relief shipments. We will seek the approval required via the U.S. or Canadian governments and approval from the U.N. Sanctions Committee. For MCC there is a difference between submitting to government authorities on shipments for humanitarian supplies and on decisions about personal encounter."*—John M. Spidaliere for MCC News Service*

MCC worker Amy Gopp welcomes Marija Opačić, a Croatian refugee who lost her home in ethnic fighting in the former Yugoslavia.

God told the Israelites to treat newcomers justly and that, "the stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love the stranger as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt...." (Leviticus 19:34)

Just as our ancestors were welcomed to North America years ago, we are today asked to show that same hospitality to newcomers in our midst.

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."
(Matthew 25:35)

A resource available from MCC U.S. titled "Welcoming the Newcomer: Doing Advocacy with Immigrants," confronts the issues surrounding immigration and answers the question, "How can I help my neighbor?" To receive a copy of the packet, contact MCC U.S. at (717)859-3889.

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by the way ...

During World War II, 35,000-37,000 Mennonites from the Soviet Union were resettled in Germany by the Nazis.
—Mennonite Historian

Health organization names president

GOSHEN, Ind.—Rick Stiffney has been named president of Mennonite Health Services, effective immediately. He had been interim president since August 1998, when president Larry Nikkel became interim president of Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kan.

Stiffney previously was senior vice president at Greencroft, a Goshen, Ind., retirement community, and vice president for home ministries at Mennonite Board of Missions.

Mennonite Health Services is an organization of 60 Anabaptist-related health and human services organizations. MHS also provides consulting and management services to nonprofit organizations.

MBM gives grant for El Paso, Texas, work

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has awarded a $5,000 grant to help Amor Viviente U.S.A. with church planting in El Paso, Texas. Amor Viviente, an Anabaptist denomination based in Honduras, has developed a 100-person congregation in El Paso during the past year.

The congregation, whose work includes ministries to people with alcohol and drug addictions, wants to expand its efforts across the border. “Our goal is basically for this congregation to have the capacity to establish another congregation in Mexico,” says MBM field staff member Hector Urbina. “We want to use our congregation as a training center.”

MBM has given 21 such grants in 1998-99. *—MBM News Service*

Former hospital official accused of fraud

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—The former chief financial officer of one of the last Mennonite-affiliated hospitals is the subject of a lawsuit charging him with fraud in the disappearance of $606,233.

The lawsuit brought by BroMenn Regional Medical Center claims Edgar Smith in 1983 created a bank account ostensibly to manage rental property the hospital owns. But he funneled money from the account into a secret fund for his personal use, according to the suit. Smith left the hospital in 1997.

BroMenn’s lawsuit seeks recovery of the money allegedly taken, including interest, Smith’s salary during that time and $1 million in punitive damages. The Internal Revenue Service is also investigating, and federal and criminal charges are expected.

BroMenn was formed in 1984 by the merger of Mennonite Hospital in Bloomington and Brokaw Hospital in nearby Normal. Twenty-four Mennonite congregations are among the hospital’s owners.*—Peoria Journal Star*

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Family growth

Photo by Kathryn Goertzen

Infant Ethan Hall gets his aunt Sherry Thiesen’s attentions while having lunch in the arms of his mother, and Thiesen’s sister, Daphne Hall. Thiesen and the Halls were attending a Feb. 13-14 event on families held at Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Neb. The weekend addressed immediate, extended and church families.

Mental health care champion dies at age 80

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Arthur Jost, who helped guide Mennonite work in the mental health care field, died March 4 at the age of 80.

His interest in mental health began as a Civilian Public Service worker during World War II. Jost lobbied for the establishment of church-operated mental hospitals, and after the war he joined Mennonite Mental Health Services in establishing hospitals around the country. He served as chief executive officer of Kings View Center, Reedley, Calif., from 1948 until his retirement in 1986.

Jost, who later moved to Columbus where he was a member of Columbus Mennonite Church, also served on the board of Mennonite Mutual Aid and was a member of the New Call to Peacemaking steering committee.

A native of Saskatchewan, Jost was denied U.S. citizenship in the 1950s because he was a conscientious objector. He appealed his case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in his favor.—*Christian Leader*

Colombian peacemaker witnesses historic talks

SAN VICENTE, Colombia—When the first-ever peace talks between Colombian guerrillas and the country's president were held earlier this year, a Colombian Mennonite was there to witness it.

Ricardo Esquivia, director of JustaPaz, the peace and justice office of the Colombia Mennonite Church, was invited by President Andres Pastrana to attend the talks as an observer.

The invitation is viewed as legitimizing Protestants in the predominantly Catholic country.

Colombia has been ravaged by almost 50 years of civil war among three main guerrilla groups, state military forces and various independent paramilitary squads.—*GCMC-CMC news services*

Mennonite friend in Botswana dies

NEWTON, Kan.—Archbishop Israel Motswasele, head of the Spiritual Healing Church in Botswana, who visited the General Conference Mennonite Church triennial sessions in Sioux Falls, S.D., in 1992, died March 1. He was 65.

For more than 25 years, Motswasele was a key figure in work with African Independent Churches by Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Central Committee. "In all our relationships, Motswasele made us feel surrounded by love and acceptance," says Jim Juhnke, who with Anna, his wife, directed MCC work in Botswana from 1970 to 1972.—*GCMC-AIMM-MCC news services*

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Registration is $150 per person, including all meals. A discount of $50 per person is available to teams of three or more if registration is paid as a group. For conference materials and registration information, contact the Boyer Center or visit the web site at www.boyercenter.org.

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Events

Council on Church and Media annual meeting, April 16-18, Toronto. Contact 219-294-7131 or ccm44@excite.com.

"Replacing Fear With Hope: Violence Prevention in Our Communities" conference, April 15-17, Goshen (Ind.) College. Contact: joannp@goshen.edu or 219-535-7556.

"Neighbors After All: A Biblical Approach to Immigration" Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office spring seminar, April 25-27. Contact: 202-544-6564 or mccwash@mcc.org.

Workers

Correction: The name of Elizabeth Caes was misspelled in the Feb. 23 issue.

Births

Baker, Jack Cole, Feb. 27, to Rick and Shira Baker, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Cossins, Kayla Dolyne, Jan. 2, to Denise (Dester) and Rob Cossins, Spring Hill, Kan.

Dester, Emma Faith, Feb. 19, to Gary and Toni (Dunn) Dester, West Lafayette, Ind.

Hackman, Elise Michelle, Feb. 19, to Andre and Shelly Hackman, Baltimore.

Herrold, Hunter Douglas, Feb. 19, to Aida and Doug Herrold, Winter Springs, Fla.

Meyer, Katie Marie, Feb. 2, to Carrie (Wright) and Kevin Meyer, Lebanon, Pa.

Plank, Joel Mark, Feb. 27, to Kathy (Blosser) and Mark Plank, Syracuse, Ind.

Snader, Melanie Jean, Feb. 28, to Charles and Lisa (Oswald) Snader, Goshen, Ind.

Sollenberger, Paul Allen, Feb. 14, to Glenna (Murray) and Marcus Sollenberger, Campinas, Brazil.

Streicher, Devon Scott, Jan. 10, to Cindy (Kuepfer) and Ervin Streicher, Newton, Ont.

Stutzman, Tanner Scott, Feb. 19, to Julie (Gerber) and Stacy Stutzman, Sarasota, Fla.

Troyer, William Thomas, March 5, to Krista (Vogt) and Tim Troyer, Goshen, Ind.

Weiler, Lauren Rose, Feb. 11, to Rosanne (Martin) and Willie Weiler, Myerstown, Pa.

Marriages

Burkholder/Wideman: Ryan Burkholder, Uxbridge, Ont., and Rhonda Wideman, Breslau, Ont., Feb. 13 at Breslau Mennonite Church.

Kramer/Stover: Doris Kramer, Hatfield, Pa., and Bert Stover, Souderton, Pa., Feb. 20 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

McComsey/Umble: Samuel McComsey Jr., Christiana, Pa., and Angela Umble, Christiana, Feb. 20 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Deaths

Becker, Mary Regehr, 85, Inman, Kan., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Jake Becker. Other survivors: son Gene Becker; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Bickel, Elizabeth, 73, Raleigh, N.C., died Jan. 28. Spouse: Donald Bickel. Other survivors: children Mark, Geoffrey, Peter; three grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Raleigh.

Birky, Anna Lapp, 84, Kalispell, Mont., died Feb. 13. Spouse: Elmer Birky (deceased). Parents: Frank and Lena Lapp (deceased). Survivors: children Lawrence, Lyle, Dale, Allen; 15 grandchildren; 38 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell.

Brockmueller, Annie Hofer, 90, Freeman, S. D., died Feb. 28 of cancer. Spouse: (1st) Paul Hofer (deceased); (2nd) Sam Brockmueller. Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Hofer (deceased). Other survivors: children Norman Hofer, Paul Hofer Jr., Gladys Mendel; stepchildren Percy and Rudy Brockmueller, Blanche Tschetter; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Falb, Milton, 86, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Feb. 17. Spouse: Esther Beechy Falb. Parents: David and Martha Falb (deceased). Other survivors: children Jane Sears, Betty Hochstetler, Dean, Don; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Gascho, Ida, 90, Cairo, Neb., died Feb. 10 of a stroke. Parents: Joseph and Jacobina Gascho (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 13 at Wood River (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Godshall, Doris Mae Stout, 76, Lakeworth, Fla., died Feb. 16. Spouse: William Godshall. Parents: Ralph and Georgina Stout (deceased). Other survivors: children Ralph, James, Gerald; 10 grandchlildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 22 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hartzler, Julia Yoder, 79, Belleville, Pa., died Feb. 27. Spouse: Jefferson Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Jemima Yoder Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Jefferson, Margaret Neer, Arlene Yoder; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: March 2 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Hunsberger, William, 94, Spring City, Pa., died Feb. 1 of pneumonia. Spouse: Waneta Shenk Hunsband Hunsberger. Parents: Martin and Emma Jane Jones Hunsberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Ray, Phillip, June Nafziger, Jane; 12 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City.

Kenagy, Eva Mary Lais, 86, Canby, Ore., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Roy Kenagy. Parents: Daniel and Ellen Egli Lais (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry Lais, stepchildren Audrey Schrock, Leroy Kenagy, Todd Kenagy; 22 grandchildren; 52 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 22 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Lawrence, Guy, 70, Boyertown, Pa., died Feb. 19. Spouse: Irene Lawrence. Other survivors: children Linda Cappel, Lowell, Larry, Linwood; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Boyertown.

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Lehman, Richard, 80, Berlin, Pa., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Ethel Grine Croyle. Parents: Hiram and Mary Thomas Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Lillian Bunker; one grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 25 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Longacre-Smith, Anne, 38, Bally, Pa., died Feb. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Kenneth Smith. Parents: Daniel and Gail Longacre. Other survivors: stepchildren Brenda Smith, Deborah Wanamaker, Sharyn Smith, Andrea Smith; two stepgrandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 20 at Bally (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Luther, Martin, 90, Kouts, Ind., died Feb. 17. Spouse: (1st) Isabelle Foster Luther (deceased); (2nd) Frances Birky Luther. Parents: Robert and Ella Weaver Luther (deceased). Other survivors: children Fred, Betty Jennings, Vera Kirby, Richard, Gene; stepchildren Lyle Whitmer, Virginia Nunemaker, Karen Bachman; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 20 at Tipp City, Ohio.

Mast, Beulah, 94, Millersburg, Ohio, died Feb. 21. Spouse: Paul Mast (deceased). Parents: John and Lydia Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Schultz, Julia Mishler, Ellis; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 24 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Miller, Ralph, 80, Sarasota, Fla., died Feb. 7 from heart complications. Spouse: Rosetta Miller. Parents: Crist and Sarah Shrock Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Lynette Vandasle, Garry; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 25 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Mylin, Emma Newcomer, 90, Millersville, Pa., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Robert Mylin. Parents: Amos and Clara Witmer Newcomer (deceased). Other survivors: children Dorothy Weidman, Lois Keller, Richard, Glen; 16 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Millersville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Oswald, Alvin Daniel, 78, Manson, Iowa, died Feb. 4. Spouse: Helen Miller Oswald. Parents: Daniel and Katie Oswald (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Ladella Hershberger, Donald, David, Rachel Yoder; 14 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Quiring, Herman, 77, Cordell, Okla., died Feb. 23 of cancer. Parents: Peter and Suzanna Quiring (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 25 at Herold Mennonite Church, Bessie, Okla.

Raeburn, Alexandra Elizabeth, stillborn Feb. 20, Bluffton, Ohio. Parents: Ray and Beth Suter Raeborn. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Bluffton.

Saltzman, Gertrude Schweitzer, 96, Shickley, Neb., died Feb. 24. Spouse: Ben Saltzman (deceased). Parents: Nick and Mattie Troyer Schweitzer (deceased). Survivors: children Ruby Kennel, Bonnie Stutzman, Roland, Donald, Darreld, Mattie Kuhns, Aubrey, Barbara Eichelberger, Gary; 21 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Swartzendruber, Bernetta Schweitzer, 75, Shickley, Neb., died Feb. 19. Spouse: Virgil Swartzendruber. Parents: Lloyd and Katie Springer Schweitzer (deceased). Other survivors: children Billie, Robin Lobeda; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 22 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Swartzendruder, Dolce, 76, Sarasota, Fla., died Feb. 22 of a stroke. Spouse: Fred Swartzendruder. Other survivors: children Anita Fobes, Fred, Galen, Steven; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 25 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Schwarzentraub, Menno, 94, Morton, Ill, died Feb. 26. Spouse: Lela Schwarzentraub. Parents: Joseph and Johanna Kennel Schwarzentraub (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Donald, Delores Kirkwood; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 2 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Varvaro, Joyce, 66, Staten Island, N. Y., died Feb. 2. Spouse: Frank Varvaro (deceased). Survivors: children Francis, Thomas, Torrence, Julie Sanchez, Marie Glover, Diane DeBraan, Carolyn; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Staten Island.

Wogomon, Irene Weldy, 82, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 27. Spouse: Walter Wogomon. Parents: John and Mable Yoder Grabill (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Alice Lehman; stepdaughter Connie McGowen; five grandchildren; five stepgrandchildren; six great-grandchildren; six stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Weinsheimer, William, 70, Wadsworth, Ohio, died Feb. 4. Parents: Phlaran and Margaret Weinsheimer (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 8 at Wadsworth.

Yoder, Emma, 89, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Feb. 18. Spouse: Eli Yoder (deceased). Parents: Jonas and Katie Miller Coblentz (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Raber, Elsie Gingerich, Gene; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio.

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classifieds

- **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich., seeks ***summer program director***. Experience in Christian camping, teaching or youth ministry desirable. Contact brian@amigocentre.org or call 616-651-2811.

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has a ***custodial position*** available immediately. Evening hours, good benefits. Contact Miles Yoder at 717-299-0436; fax 717-299-0823; email office@lmhs.com.

- **Allegheny Mennonite Conference** is seeking a full-time ***youth minister*** to begin Aug. 15, 1999. Areas of ministry include youth, junior high and children's activities. Mennonite Church salary guidelines will be used. Request more information or send resume to Allegheny Mennonite Conference, P.O. Box 12, Somerset, PA 15501; 814-443-2007; email ALLEGHENYCONFERENCE@compuserve.com by April 5, 1999.

- **Seattle Mennonite Church:** full-time ***youth pastor***. Active urban church seeks energetic, creative individual to expand youth program at Seattle Mennonite Church. Commitment to Anabaptist teachings, great communication skills and B.A. in youth ministry or equivalent experience required. Contact Eileen Crawford, 206-523-2161 or email camila@gte.net

- **Menno-Hof** seeks ***visitor center manager***. This full-time position carries the responsibilities of day-to-day operations of this popular tourist educational center. Commitment to ministry and good people skills are central. Please write or call for job description. Menno-Hof, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565; 219-768-4117.

- **Oaklawn** programs serving children, adolescents, adults and addictions have openings for ***case managers***. Responsibilities include participation in treatment planning, advocacy, identifying and obtaining needed community resources. Requirements: BA in mental health-related field with child, adolescent, adult or addictions experience preferred. Experience in case management a plus.

  Contact Oaklawn, Human Resources Dept., 330 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527; 219-533-1234. EEO/AA

- **Mennonite Information Center** in Berlin, Ohio, seeks ***executive director***. This 1/2- to 3/4-time position will appeal to individuals with vision and an ability to relate to a diverse Anabaptist constituency. Training or experience in any combination of administration, fund-raising, Anabaptist studies, staff supervision or marketing is desirable. Salary competitive, retirees welcome.

  Call Steve Steiner, 330-893-2926 for information, or send application to Mennonite Information Center, Box 324, Berlin, OH 44610. Website http://pages.sssnet.com/behalt

- **Oaklawn** is actively recruiting ***general psychiatrists*** to join our comprehensive inpatient and/or outpatient clinical services. Oaklawn, sponsored by Mennonite Health Services, has over 30 years of experience providing a wide array of psychiatric services. Oaklawn's church sponsorship and motto, "Toward Health and Wholeness," exemplifies our commitment to addressing the mental, physical, social and spiritual needs of the people we serve. Located in the beautiful farming country of northern Indiana we enjoy the small-town atmosphere of the Goshen-Elkhart area. We are also in close proximity to South Bend, Chicago and Indianapolis.

  We look forward to discussing further with you employment opportunities at Oaklawn. Please contact either Ray Hunsberger, Dir. Human Resources, or Carl Rutt, M.D., Medical Director, at 800-282-0809 or P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for the ***Damascus Road organizer/MCC East Coast staff associate*** for peace education for MCC U.S. and MCC East Coast. Qualifications include a personal passion and sense of calling to the task of dismantling racism within and strong commitment to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions; willingness to rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit for the entirety of this work; willingness to participate in the Damascus Road anti-racism process and agreement with the nine core principles undergirding the Damascus Road network; experience in group organizing (community-based, church-based, labor-based or in other areas); strong organizing skills, specifically, the ability to work well with a racially diverse range of people in the Anabaptist community, both leadership and laity; envision, implement and articulate organizing strategy; adapt and revise plans midstream; motivate people to achieve new anti-racism goals and objectives; educate groups to the need for organizing strategy; agitate the powerful when necessary; help people gain a sense of their own power; good communication skills (verbal and written); training or experience in peace and justice concerns; ability to use or learn to use appropriate technology for organizing tasks (email, word processing, phone conferencing, etc.); familiarity with urban culture and life an asset. This is a full-time, two-year salaried position. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151; Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Dept., or email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org. The last day to receive applications is April 30, 1999; starting date is June 1, 1999. Candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and/or bilingual (Spanish-English) candidates are encouraged to apply.

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by Gordon Houser

You've no doubt seen articles about it in newspapers or magazines or heard about it on radio or television. Next Jan. 1 ushers in, if not a new millennium, then at least a year that ends in 00. It's the Y2K problem.

Years ago, computer programmers, needing memory and lacking foresight, set up computers using only two digits to refer to the year. Thus some software will read "00" as 1900, not 2000, which may cause problems for whatever function is tied to that program.

People debate how severe the problem will be come Jan. 1, 2000, but most agree there will be problems.

David Wilhelm, in the Feb. 17 *Christian Century*, points out that in May, all 640,000 National Guardsmen from across the United States will participate in a drill designed to prepare them to respond to the interruption of all telephone service. And even the CIA has a Y2K office.

One factor of the Y2K bug is the huge cost of fixing it. The United Nations estimates the global cost of Y2K compliance at between $300 billion and $600 billion.

Different people take different approaches. The Chinese have ordered their airline executives to fly on one of their planes on Jan. 1, 2000. And Mennonite missionaries Christine and Phil Lindell Detweiler in Benin invite anyone concerned about Y2K to live with them in their village.

A recent U.S. government report rated various segments of society according to their preparedness for the Y2K bug. Among those receiving the lowest ratings were the health-care industry and the Pentagon. That's enough to cause a bit of anxiety even for an optimist.

While some people, fearing the worst, stockpile food, generators and guns (see *The Mennonite*, March 9, page 15), many others generally ignore all the fuss and pretend that nothing will change. Perhaps we need a more balanced approach.

That's the watchword of a newsletter begun by Multnomah Publishers. The monthly *Countdown Y2K* seeks to offer "a balanced Christian approach" to the problem. Rather than emphasizing only taking care of yourself, it encourages Christians and churches to be prepared in order to help others as well. To order a subscription you may call toll free 888-474-4925, fax 541-549-9704, email y2k@multnomahpubl.com or visit www.multnomahbooks.com. If you subscribe, use the source code MAG217.

Multnomah also has published the book *Y2K: The Millennium Bug* by Shaunti Christine Feldhahn ($12.99), which presents possible scenarios and ways Christians can respond by helping people.

The spring issue of *Sharing*, published by Mennonite Mutual Aid, includes "Tangling with the Y2K Bug" by Judy Martin Godshalk. With that article is a personal Y2K guide, which offers some advice for getting a better handle on your vulnerability to the problem.

You may also want to visit web sites such as these: www.christianity2k.com and www.chrbook.com/Christian/Books/specialty.html?special.id=1562, both of which offer warnings about tying this technological problem to biblical prophecy.

David Wilhelm calls Y2K an opportunity for contemplation, reflection and evangelism. He writes: "The national discussion of this topic should not be dominated by voices of fear and reaction."

What are you doing about it? Is your congregation discussing how to respond? Has your family talked about it?

books

Things in Heaven and Earth: Exploring the Supernatural, edited by Harold Fickett (Paraclete Press, 1998, $20), includes 14 essays by Christian writers of note. Their pieces come in varied forms, from personal stories to historical and biographical sketches to philosophical considerations. That variety, plus the quality of the writing, makes this a compelling, provocative book. In his introduction, Fickett notes the "reigning skepticism" of our age that tends to stifle discussion of the supernatural. He writes: "Within the human spirit lies a disturbing counter to cynicism—a strange and almost inextinguishable hope that God loves us, that God hears us, and that God acts as if he does both." The writers include Madeleine L'Engle, Ron Hansen, Paul C. Vitz, Luci Shaw, Larry Woiwode and Doris Betts. This well-written book is worth exploring.

films

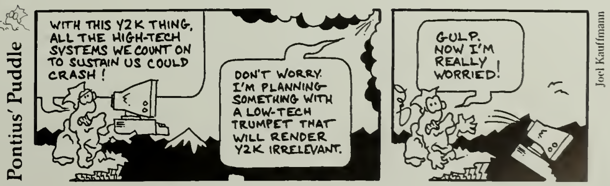
A brief look at four recent films:

Life Is Beautiful (PG-13) is a gutsy Italian film, a tragicomedy about the Holocaust. Calling itself a fable, it tells the story of a Jew who helps his young son survive Auschwitz by convincing him their imprisonment is a game.

Hilary and Jackie (R) tells the story of famed cellist Jackie Dupre (played stunningly by Emily Watson) and her sister. Hilary is an excellent flautist who decides to live a more normal life than her sister, whose bizarre behavior shows the perils of being a genius.

October Sky (PG) is based on a true story of four West Virginia high school students in 1957-58 who learn to build rockets. Though the plot is predictable and the coal miner father of the main character is one-dimensional, it is nevertheless inspiring, saved by its being true. A rare film for the whole family.

Rushmore (R) is not for the whole family. But this quirky film is endearing, as Max Fischer of Rushmore Academy, a genius in his own right, falls in love with a teacher and learns about loss and redemption.


Pontius' Puddle
WITH THIS Y2K THING, ALL THE HIGH-TECH SYSTEMS WE COUNT ON TO SUSTAIN US COULD CRASH!
DON'T WORRY. I'M PLANNING SOMETHING WITH A LOW-TECH TRUMPET THAT WILL RENDER Y2K IRRELEVANT.
GULP. NOW I'M REALLY WORRIED!
Joel Kauffmann

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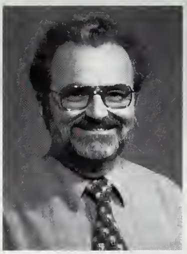

J. Lorne Peachey

Easter is to be surprised by joy . . .

No matter that I've experienced close to 35 springs in western Pennsylvania, I continue to be surprised when it happens: my first glimpse of a coltsfoot, that yellow dandelion-looking flower that pushes its way through dead leaves and mud, sometimes snow and ice, to tell me new life is about to happen.

This year I had to go hunting for it. March has been more like January, with the cinder-crusted snow becoming more and more depressing. So I went for a drive—and finally saw them along a back country road by an illegal garbage dump, of all things: first a single yellow flower, then another, a third, and finally a whole bed of them when my eyes knew where to look.

I never cease to thrill at the sight of the first coltsfoot of the season. I wonder if what I feel is what it was like for followers of Jesus after the resurrection. First one disciple saw the risen Lord, then another follower, and still a third. Out of the agony and despair, the bewilderment and confusion, the anger and fear of the betrayal, trial and crucifixion, here was a glimpse of new life. Jesus might still be among them. What a surprise! What joy!

My favorite story of surprised recognition of the resurrected Jesus comes from John 21. Completely dispirited by what they had just gone through, seven of the disciples turned to the only thing they knew: fishing. But even here they had lost their touch; fishing all night, they caught nothing. It was John who saw the first sign of new life, the first "coltsfoot" of a new beginning. "It is the Lord!" he whispered to Peter when he recognized the figure on the shore bending over a charcoal fire.

Peter completely lost his head in surprise. He pulled on some clothes and jumped into the water. (Common sense would have it the other way around, not?) I can't image a joy more complete than Peter's must have been as he pulled himself from the water and ran up the shore to Jesus.

Yet in spite of knowing the story will end in resurrection, how often, like Peter and the other disciples, I come to Easter with little faith that anything new can poke its way through the dullness and the evil of everyday existence. Even in the church I find myself mired by debates and disagreements, with the endless repetition of doing things the way we've always done them, with the seeming impossibility of new life emerging from tired structures that resist any kind of change.

But I should know. Just when everything seems bleakest, just when I've concluded that this time for sure nothing good can come out of whatever despair I'm in, God comes through. It's happened to me often enough now that I should be getting used to it. But I'm not. I continue to be surprised by surprise, awed by the newness that God can bring—much like my sighting the first coltsfoot of a western Pennsylvania spring.—*jlp*

Just when everything seems bleakest, just when I've concluded that this time for sure nothing good can come out of whatever despair I'm in, God comes through with another surprise.

. . . even in the work we are called to do

We who edit this magazine week after week come into Easter 1999 experiencing our own surprises.

After our two issues on homosexuality and the church this past January, we lost count at 93 subscription cancellations and more than 150 other communications via either letter or email. As you might imagine, we went through considerable second-guessing about some editorial judgments we had made.

But then we saw it: the first sign of something different. It came in the form of a $500 contribution as a result of a letter we sent out in late January to U.S. subscribers requesting donations to help keep subscription costs down.

That $500 became a trickle, then a stream, eventually almost a flood. To date, more than 700 subscribers have donated $27,400 to our work. That's a 3.9 percent response—a most respectful figure, we've been told by people who work in this field.

What a surprise! What joy! Thank you to all who contributed to our work in this way. In our gratitude we are also humbled. Response like this keeps us striving to become an even better medium of communication, inspiration and dialogue for you, our readers.—*jlp*

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the Mennonite

April 6, 1999

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Creating and discerning

I support in principle Ed Rempel's procedure for integration (Readers Say, March 9) in which he proposes we conceptualize the next steps not as a merger but as the creation of a new entity—a subtle but important shift. I have felt for some time that requiring every congregation to choose to join the new entity is the best approach. It recognizes the need for both a clearly defined common identity and high ownership ("autonomy") at the congregational level. Both emphases are important not only in integration but for healthy corporate life.

My only concern in Rempel's proposal is his no-censure clause, which may invite a blink at the issue(s) fueling our present conversation. The March 16 editorial ("Dear God, Might You Send Us a James?") is a prayer for a James to speak. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective is just such a voice. It speaks a consensual word from much discussion that included many individuals in local congregations. That process was the real "Jerusalem Conference." Our affirmation of the confession gave it an authoritative voice. I'm with Rempel as long as a congregation saying yes to membership in the new entity is a good-faith, clear, simple yes to the intent of a straightforward reading of the James who has spoken in our midst.

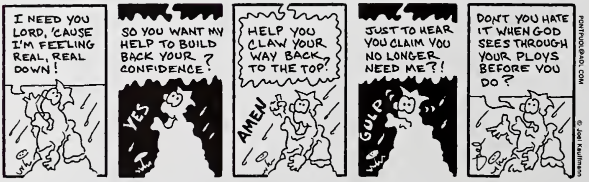
Rempel's proposal moves us off a one-issue approach to next steps, which is the true beauty in it.—*Jonathan Smith, Calico Rock, Ark.*

A few words about the excellent March 16 editorial: Do we have any Jameses left? Perhaps, but couldn't the Mennonite church as a whole emulate James? Perhaps not. My solution is to look at the various area conferences where the gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered issue seems muted and more or less successfully solved. This eliminates those conferences who kicked out certain congregations for harboring GLBTs in committed relationships as well as those conferences with a big self-study program.

What one finds is that the best conferences draw a fine line between too much conference oversight and too much congregational freedom. I am thinking of Allegheny when it decided some years ago to let congregations solve in their own way whether or not to have a woman pastor. I have hope that this conference would do the same with respect to the GLBT issue. In brief, the only way out of this mess is to have fewer top-down directives and more congregational decision making affecting the spiritual growth in that congregation. Otherwise, I fear we'll have a major split, which few of us really want.—*Carl S. Keener, State College, Pa.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


I NEED YOU LORD, 'CAUSE I'M FEELING REAL, REAL DOWN!
SO YOU WANT MY HELP TO BUILD BACK YOUR CONFIDENCE?
YES
HELP YOU CLAW YOUR WAY BACK TO THE TOP?
AMEN
JUST TO HEAR YOU CLAIM YOU NO LONGER NEED ME?!
GULP
DON'T YOU HATE IT WHEN GOD SEES THROUGH YOUR PLOYS BEFORE YOU DO?
PONTPUOL@AOL.COM
© Joel Kauffmann

I am distressed that so many, *The Mennonite* included, seem to think that the "Jerusalem Conference" can be the key to resolving the homosexual issue. Circumcision and homosexuality are not parallel issues. Please show me one place where God ordered people who are not circumcised to be put to death. Please show me one place where the Bible records that people not circumcised have no place in the kingdom of heaven. If there is a James, he will know the difference.—*Verle Hoffman, Elkhart, Ind.*

There are those who will not be part of the integrated Mennonite Church if some on one side of the issue are included. And then there are those who don't intend to be part of it if some on the other side are included. I've decided to go along either way. One reality is that a vast majority of the candidates for integration seem willing to be included, regardless of how the membership issue is determined. May our leaders who carry the enormous load of the integration process have the strength, guidance and courage demonstrated by our European Anabaptist forefathers and foremothers.—*Paul H. Martin, Des Moines, Iowa*

Not soon forgotten

Thank you for "A Search for Home" (Feb. 16) on Chuck Neufeld and his wife, Bonnie, honoring their 25 years with Mennonite Voluntary Service. My family and I were privileged to meet Chuck last summer at an MVS orientation before leaving for our assignment. His ministry of music and faith stories was a true gifts to us. His contagious, heartfelt laugh, sincere trust in God and powerful lyrics will not soon be forgotten. My first anxious weeks in a new city were softened by the memories of Chuck's examples of faith in his urban setting. I'm sure I speak for many others as I thank him for his Spirit-filled encouragement and teaching

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readers say

over the past years of service. Chuck and Bonnie, may you continue to "dream with that Light in your eyes."—*Wendy Kennel, Tucson, Ariz.*

A fast example

Re "Only by Prayer and Fasting" (Editorial, Feb. 16): Here is one example of a congregation fasting regularly. Since December 1997, people of our congregation in Strasbourg, France, freely fast once a month (at least one meal) on a specific day. In the evening of that day, we meet for prayer together. It started because of the illness of a young woman, married and the mother of three children. She has liver cancer. But upon her insistence, fasting and prayer is extended also to other people of the congregation who are ill.

The benefits of this experience are solidarity with suffering people, a higher level of awareness about health problems among people of the congregation, increasing motivation for prayer and discerning God's message to the congregation. It is not easy to fast and to work, but it is a reminder to pray and care for those who suffer among us.—*Michel Sommer, Strasbourg, France*

A difference

The headline for the March 9 article "Help for Those Down on the Farm" does not describe the content of the article. The subtitle, "Business Training for Rural Poor a First for MEDA," does describe the article well. The image of farmers is given a distinct put-down by the first title. Most farmers I know have a positive image of themselves and really prefer not to be categorized with the rural poor. MEDA is addressing the needs of the rural poor and not the needs of the agricultural community. There is a difference.—*Glenn Zimmerly, Lushnje, Albania*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

The iconoclast

by Ann Hostetler

My grandfather Ezra stroked leftover
red paint on weathered boards
until a man's profile filled the space
on the side of the shed, worldly mustache
and pompadour facing west, the same
direction his family had traveled

to bleak Alberta wheatfields, where Ezra,
who shaved his own mustache,
served church and family. Tuesday nights
he played baseball (despite the deacon's visits)—
nothing wrong with a little fun—and on Sundays
drew eagles in the margins of his Bible.

But when a newcomer complained
his neighbor was Red—hadn't he painted
Stalin on his shed?—Ezra shrugged,
covered the face with whitewash. Still,
he plowed with a book in his hands. Seeds
will sprout from crooked furrows just the same,
he said.

Ann Hostetler teaches English at Goshen (Ind.) College.

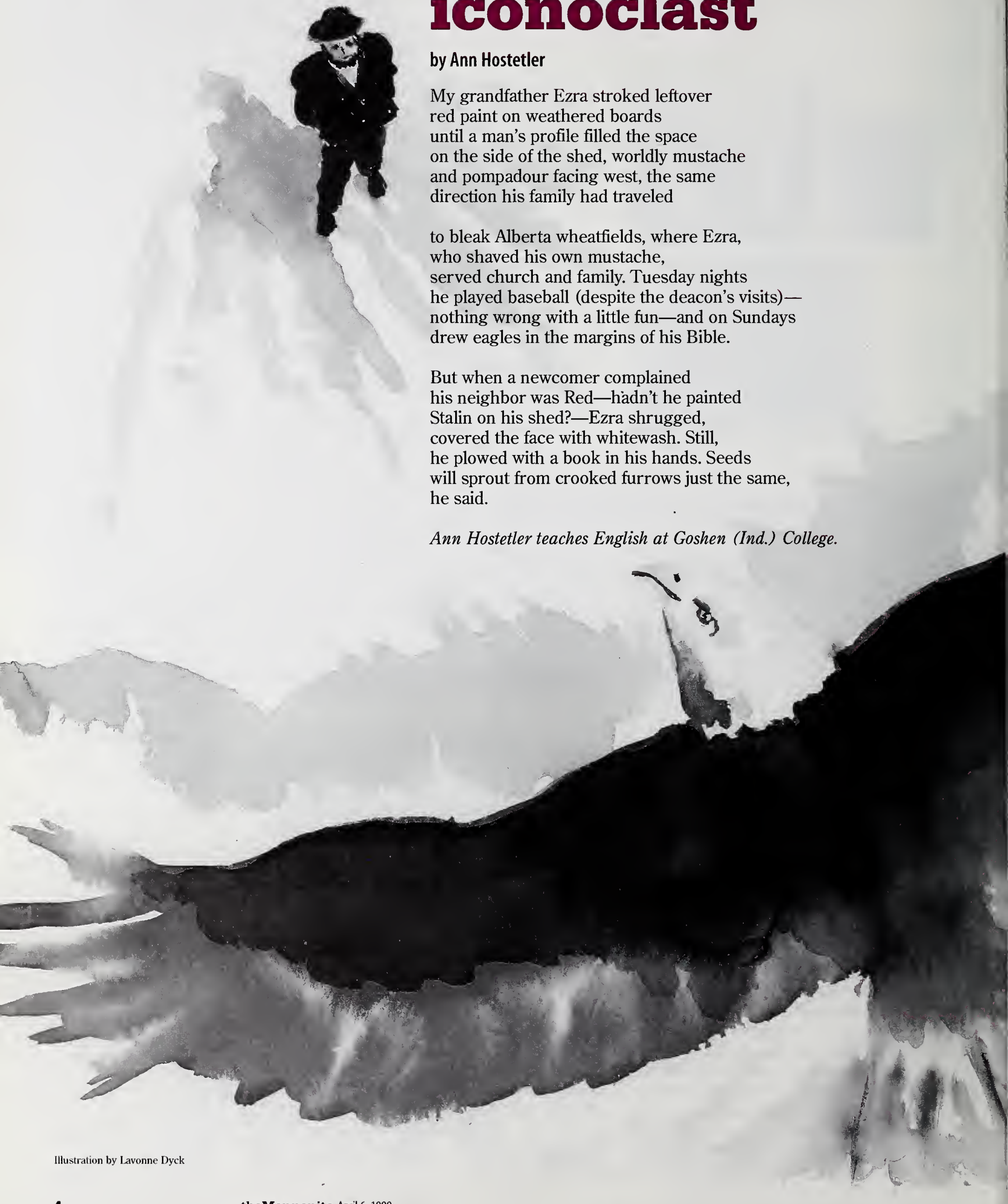

Illustration by Lavonne Dyck

The claims of God and Caesar

Taxes are entwined with life and death, as they were for Jesus in his day.

by Marian Franz

A decree [went out] from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.—Luke 2:1 KJV

Taxes are intricately entwined in the birth of Jesus, in the death of Jesus and all during his life. Taxes were the reason Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem. Their pilgrimage made them most unhappy, since they considered the new tax a blasphemy against God. They were already overtaxed: the temple tax, property taxes, trade taxes. These made them poorer and poorer, yet they paid them. This new tax, however, was different. Caesar Augustus meant to have his military might spread through every last area of the then-known world. He wanted to build roads for his Roman soldiers to march and fight and subdue and occupy outlying regions such as Palestine.

For this new tax, Caesar had a special coin minted. It was a form of the denarius. On one side of the coin was Caesar's image and the words, "Caesar, the August Son of the August God" or, "The worship-worthy son of the worship-worthy God." On the other side of the coin was an image of Caesar's mother sitting on the throne of the gods. We can scarcely imagine the affront this was to Jews. Only God was king. This new tax by an emperor, who was not God, made them sad, fearful, angry.

The new tax was first implemented in A.D. 6. It caused bloody revolts all over Palestine. But Caesar Augustus knew how to put down revolts in the cruelest way. He had hundreds of people crucified in his attempt to force payment. In the town of Sepphoris alone, 200 died this way. Their bodies were not taken down from the crosses at their deaths but left for months along the roadsides so all could see the cost of following God instead of Caesar. It is thought, since Sepphoris is near Nazareth, that the boy Jesus probably saw—and certainly knew about—these crosses.

Taxes also play a role at the end of Jesus' life. The Herodians and the Pharisees came to him with a carefully crafted trap: "Should we pay Caesar's tax or not?" The Herodians thought the tax should be paid. The Pharisees taught that the tax should not be paid, but in practice they took the easy way and paid it. The other taxes they had already paid were not in question. The Herodians and the Pharisees hated each other, but they hated Jesus of Nazareth even more. In order to get him out of the way, the two groups joined to trap him.

This story ends with, "And they were amazed." They had crafted their question well. Whatever he said, he was doomed. If he said to pay the tax, he would be in trouble with the religious leaders. If he said to not pay the tax, he would bring down Caesar's wrath. Jesus' first question to them was, "Why do you put me to the test?"

He said, "Show me a coin. Whose image and inscription is this?" The Pharisees pulled from their purses Caesar's coin, with its image of Caesar, "the August Son of the August God." In producing the coin the Pharisees broke two of the Ten Commandments: "You shall have no graven images" and, "You shall have no other gods before me." You did not need this coin with you if you intended to buy fish or bread or olives or lamb in the market. You could buy those with other forms of the denarius. The only reason to have this coin was if you intended to pay the tax. The Pharisees, who meant to expose Jesus, had exposed themselves.

Many claim Jesus was saying, "All right, since you are already paying the tax, then you might as well give to Caesar what is Caesar's." But they should not have been paying that tax. He then said what was the whole teaching of his life: "Give to God what is God's."

Shortly after this, Jesus was crucified. How was his answer understood? "Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. They began to accuse him, saying, 'We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king' " (Luke 23:1-2).

Death and taxes: Benjamin Franklin said nothing is certain but death and taxes. The comic-strip character Pogo says that what the taxpayer resents about death and taxes is that they do not come in that order. The connection between death and taxes is sobering. When we pay our taxes by April 15, 19 percent of each dollar will go to debts on past wars and veterans' affairs, and 24 percent will go to new military spending above what is being spent. That's a total of 43 percent for the military.

Every day 32,000 children die due to lack of nutrition and inexpensive vaccines. Every day. I can never come to grips with that; I don't

Jesus said what was the whole teaching of his life: "Give to God what is God's."

We are against these weapons, not because they are too dangerous but because they are too weak. They are too weak to clothe and feed, embrace and educate, heal and make whole.

want to believe it. I had to call UNICEF at the United Nations to be sure this was really true. Yes, they said. Money spent for military hardware cannot be spent on nutrition or vaccines.

In the U.S. arsenals are weapons called Titan and Poseidon, which are names of gods. Are we sacrificing children to the gods?

There is a double violence in military spending. The weapons kill when they are used, and they kill even though they are never used. President Eisenhower said, “Every gun that is made, every rocket launched, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who are hungry and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.” We are against these weapons, someone said, not because they are too dangerous but because they are too weak. They are too weak to clothe and feed, embrace and educate, heal and make whole.

Peace Tax Fund resources

Video

Compelled by Conscience: Why We Need a Peace Tax Fund, 20-minute, $15, rental $10

Books

Communities of Conscience: Collected Statements on Conscience and Taxes for Military Preparation, $7.95
War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military, edited by Ruth Benn, $12
Questions That Refuse to Go Away by Marian Franz, $5.95
Downwardly Mobile for Conscience' Sake, edited by Dorothy Andersen, $10
Why I Am a Conscientious Objector by John M. Drescher, $4.95
Handbook on Military Taxes and Conscience, produced by Friends Committee on War Tax Concerns, $2
What Belongs to Caesar? and *The Tax Dilemma: Praying for Peace, Paying for War*, both by Donald Kaufman, $4.95 each or $7.95 for both

Tools for Peace Tax Fund activists

Activist Manual: Speaking for Conscience, $9.95
Text of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill, $.05 each
Peace Tax Fund basic brochure, $.10 each
Do Your Taxes Have To Pay for War? penny flyer, $.03 each
“Conscientious Objector,” poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay, $.25 each
“Paying for Peace,” peace tax campaigns throughout the world, $5
Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on Peace Tax Campaigns and War Tax Resistance, $6.95
Stages of Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation, $.20 each
Back copies of Peace Tax Fund newsletter, $2.95 per issue
Buttons: “Taxes for Peace Not War” or dove with leaf, $.50 each
NCPTF poster: dove and planet Earth, $1 each

Shipping charges

Below $10—add $2; $10 and over—add $4

Order from National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, 2121 Decatur Place NW,
Washington, DC 20008-1923

John Stoner did an analysis that found that for every $9 Mennonites spend on their military taxes they give $5 to charitable causes. One hand builds, the other destroys.

In the arsenals of the world today there is still, after all the downsizing, the firepower of nearly a half million Hiroshimas. Why is more needed? This year’s military budget is nearly $300 billion. According to the Center for Defense Information, we spend $8,271 per second, $725,274,725 per day and more than $5,076,923,076 per week for military use.

Indecent composure: Perhaps we are too calm about this disparity between spending for weapons and spending for human needs. There is something, I think, called “indecent composure.” In Jesus’ day, people strained their water through sieves because of insects in the water. Jesus talked about people’s sieves and said some people will strain out gnats but swallow camels. The call for people of conscience to speak up is a call for us to re-examine our moral sieves. Do we strain out tiny gnats and let something the size of camels fall through? Do we focus on small issues and ignore larger issues of injustice?

In 1975, Dan Slabaugh, a pastor-farmer in Iowa, was plowing his field, and at one point he knelt on the ground and promised God he would never again let a penny of his earned income go for military use. He wrote a letter to then Senator Mark Hatfield and told him about this. Later, Hatfield phoned Dan and said, “I’m going to introduce the Peace Tax Fund Bill so that those people of conscience will not be forced into this kind of participation.”

In 1560, Claus Felbinger, a Hutterite who was martyred, said: “Therefore we are gladly and willingly subject to the government for the Lord’s sake, and in all just matters we will in no way oppose it. When, however, the government requires of us what is contrary to our faith and conscience, such as swearing oaths and paying hangman’s dues and taxes for war, then we do not obey its commands. This we do, not out of obstinacy and pride, but only out of the pure fear of God, for it is our duty to obey God rather than men.”

This stand of conscience has been a lonely struggle for most of our history. In Burrton, Kan., townspeople marched John Schrag, a Mennonite farmer and a pacifist, down the streets to taunt him. He had not purchased war bonds. It was not mandatory by law, but it became a symbol of patriotism, and for those who did not purchase them, life was most uncomfortable. The group put a rope around John's neck with the intent to hang him. (He was saved from that only because the sheriff spirited him off into hiding.) They had poured a can of yellow paint over John to signify cowardice. Then he was marched through town to receive the jeers and taunts of the crowd.

In World War I, hundreds of conscientious objectors (COs) were imprisoned. Some received life terms. Not until 1933 were their sentences commuted by President Roosevelt. Seventeen COs were sentenced to death. Although none were executed, 16 died in prison as a result of mistreatment.

All the words and actions of conscience have made a difference. I get letters across my desk from people in support of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill. They don't just say to their legislators, "Please pass this bill." They write letters like this:

"To continue freely participating with my tax dollars in the suicidal arms race is clearly for me a sin on at least four counts. First, the sin of premeditated murder against my brothers and sisters. Second, the sin of suicide against my own person. Third, the sin of injustice against 25 percent of the earth's people who are homeless, ragged, hungry and sick through no fault of their own. Fourth, the sin of idolatry for trusting in armaments rather than Jesus Christ. To follow Jesus as I understand him, even to the cross, has become a necessary way of life for me. The decision to end the human race does not belong to Caesar. Therefore, tax dollars that wrestle that decision out of the hands of God do not either. Remaining obedient to my conscience, I refuse to voluntarily pay the war portion of my income tax."

Another way: The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill provides a way for those who have a conscience against paying their military taxes to pay 100 percent of their taxes but to have the military portion go into a separate fund that cannot be used for military purposes. The bill is a vehicle that helps make a witness. If the law is passed, people must answer three questions to become eligible: What is the nature of my belief about war? How do I come to hold that belief? How does that belief affect my life? When we answer these questions, we make our witness.

This bill provides a reason for me to walk into congressional offices. Each letter, each faithful word, each faithful action is like a pebble dropped into the water. Congressional workers say to me, "I never understood before where you people were coming from. I understand this now." Or, "I used to think you people were kooks. Now I see this is a matter of religious freedom for you." Sometimes I'm allowed only 10 minutes with them, but 45 minutes later I'm still in that office because they decide to allow themselves a little time to examine their consciences, because someone has dropped some pebbles in the water and the circles enfold them and cause self-examination at high levels.

The peace tax campaign used to be a lonely struggle. First it was mainly the peace churches. Then the mainline churches came on—the 3 million-member Presbyterian Church and the 10 million-member Methodist Church. When the Peace Tax Fund Bill had a hearing in the House of Representatives, a woman testified, "The IRS has taken away my house, my car and allows me only $500 a month to live on, because I can't follow God and do this." She added, "If my religious body, the Episcopal Church, says my action is faithful, why then does my government punish me for it?"

Unlikely allies: We have gained support from unlikely allies. The National Association of Evangelicals never used to answer my letters or return my calls. Now they come with me to senators' offices. Other allies are the conservative Christian Legal Society and the Seventh-day Adventists (who have a long history of conscientious objection).

Each of these witnesses—each letter, each faithful word, each faithful action—is like a pebble dropped into the water.

This broad delegation of supporters has made possible two visits to the White House, which then arranged a visit with the Treasury Department. One senator observed: "You're not people who are against this country. You are people whose just claim for religious freedom has been denied. This is a religious issue with me, and while I'm not a conscientious objector, I must support this."

Representatives of other religious bodies have said: "We are pleased to assist you in finding ways to get the government out of the business of punishing people of faith who seek to fulfill both their obligations to conscience and to their fellow men [sic]."

Around the world, the incidence of conscientious objection has increased tenfold. I go to Europe every two years for international conferences on peace tax campaigns. The European Parliament is getting involved, as is the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

The principled refusal on grounds of conscience and faith has a growing effect on people's consciences. May God embolden us all as we deal with the conflicting claims of God and Caesar on our lives, as we examine our moral sieves and as we drop our pebbles.

Marian Franz is director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund in Washington.

Mennonites' split personality

Praying for peace while paying for war is inconsistent and sinful.

by Steve Ratzlaff

April 15 creates a moral dilemma for most Mennonites, although most of us would never acknowledge it. Paying taxes fosters a split personality in many Mennonites—a Jekyll and Hyde way of looking at this issue.

On the one hand, we staunchly believe we cannot help our government by fighting in the armed forces. On the other hand, we provide that same government with all the cold hard cash it needs to pay others to do it. This allows us to pay for war without having to fight in it. Our consciences have become used to this. We don't even think about it anymore. The government requires us to pay taxes, but since we obtained conscientious objector status in the 1940s, we are no longer required to join the Army.

We have separated our pocketbooks from our consciences. Money has become the topic that is nobody's business but our own.

It isn't possible to pray for peace and pay for war unless you suffer from delusions or a split personality disorder. The two concepts are polar opposites. Yet 99 percent of Mennonites do that very thing.

John Steen, in a 1969 leaflet entitled "Death and Taxes," wrote: "If you were handed a gun, right now, told to shoot a man—or drop napalm on a village—you couldn't do it. … But the same good people who would vomit at the sight of burning flesh and blood on our hands have no qualms paying taxes for somebody else to kill and burn. If we are forced to face the issues, we make excuses. … The managers of the Empire will let us speak—as long as we hand over the young men and the cash. And we are afraid to refuse. … The government could never get away with murder—in Vietnam or anyplace—without help. The War Machine must be fed warm bodies and cold cash by the millions."

Steen penned these lines nearly 30 years ago at the height of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, but they are even more incriminating today. The United States spends nearly three times as much money for the military machine today as it did at that time. This annual drain on our resources not only keeps us from attacking the problems of poverty, the deficit and Social Security in our country, it also equips the rest of the world with weapons that kill millions of people every year. The weapons of the military kill when they are fired. And even when they are not used, these weapons kill by consuming valuable resources that are essential in meeting human needs.

Confession of faith: Mennonites have always believed that peace is the will of God and that we are to be peacemakers in this world. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, approved in 1995 by the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) states: "We believe that peace is the will of God … as followers of Jesus, we participate in his ministry of peace and justice. He has called us to find our blessing in making peace and seeking justice."

GCs and MCs have also passed resolutions that support those Mennonites in their midst who refuse to pay for war. These same resolutions also urge all Mennonites to support the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund and to work toward passage of legislation that will allow people of conscience to pay taxes that go only for peaceful purposes. Our history suggests that peace is something vitally important to our faith, something we should pay more than lip service to.

The problem lies in our split personality, in the mental gymnastics we use to excuse ourselves from the reality of our actions. We have separated our actions from our belief by rationalizing that we don't really have any choice; the government requires us to pay taxes. That is true. But the government required that we serve in the army before the Alternative Service Act was passed in the 1940s. We refused to serve in the armed forces then. Once they accommodated us by granting us conscientious objector status, we gladly gave them our money so they could continue to kill in our names. And they do kill, through aggressive military maneuvers and supporting almost every government in the world through the sale of arms.

We have separated our pocketbooks from our consciences. Money has become the topic that is nobody's business but our own. As a result, we allow no one to hold us accountable for the way we spend it. That includes our tax money as well. We take the path of least resistance and pay the military portion of our taxes,

Marilyn Nolt

even though that may violate our conscience.

We Mennonites are sick. We are schizophrenic when it comes to taxes that go for war. And our government is thankful for that. It was a small price to give us the option of alternative service. They really are more concerned that we continue to provide them with the cash needed to pay for their wars and military buildups. They do it with our blessing because we have convinced ourselves that we have no other recourse.

If we are really serious about following Jesus, we need to be healed of our sinfulness. We spend inordinate amounts of time defending our interpretation of Scripture while we continue to pay for war with little thought or concern.

In order to be healed we need to recognize that we have a problem. We need to ask for forgiveness. And we need to strive to sin no more. Our disorder may be hard to cure, but we believe God can do just that. And God will help the minute we come to grips with our complicity in the military endeavors of our nation.

Soul searching: It is time for Mennonites to do some serious soul searching on the issue of war taxes. John Stoner, executive secretary of A New Call to Peacemaking, has said: "We are war tax resisters because we have discovered some doubt as to what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God and have decided to give the benefit of the doubt to God." It is time for us to realize that we have given the benefit of the doubt, when it comes to paying for war, to the government.

If we believe that peace is the will of God, then how can we pay the part of our taxes that is used to kill? Right now, nearly half our national budget goes for current military expenditures or for the interest on loans taken out in the 1980s, when the Reagan administration tripled the defense budget. We budget nearly $300 billion on defense every year.

The unconditional support of the military that our government asks of us is obscene. We have withdrawn support from welfare mothers and aid to dependent children while increasing corporate welfare to the military industry. As a people of peace we cannot continue to pay for such irresponsibility in good conscience. It is time for us to listen seriously to our consciences again and to refuse to pay for such atrocities. We are a conscientious people that have lost our way and fallen ill. It's time to address our personality disorder and listen once again to Jesus' call to be peacemakers, not war supporters.

We can refuse to pay for war in many ways. We can withhold the 3 percent federal tax on our telephone bills. We can withhold a portion (from 1 to 50 percent) of our income taxes and give that amount to Mennonite Central Committee, for example. We can keep our income below taxable levels. We can support the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund with our time and our dollars.

We are a conscientious people that have lost our way and fallen ill. It's time to address our personality disorder and listen once again to Jesus' call to be peacemakers, not war supporters.

Whatever we do, we can no longer rationalize our decision to pay for war. We know better. Our actions need to be consistent with our beliefs. God has not changed. Peace is the will of God. We are the ones who have strayed. We need to change. We need to pray for peace and refuse to pay for war.

Steve Ratzlaff is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, Neb.

MCC sends aid as NATO sends bombs

More aid on the way for Serbians displaced by conflict

AKRON, Pa.—While Mennonite Central Committee staff and partners decry NATO bombing of Serbia, people fleeing the conflict are receiving MCC-provided assistance. And more MCC help is on the way.

Refugees from war-torn Kosovo are already receiving canned turkey and refugee kits from an MCC shipment that arrived in Serbia in January. That shipment, valued at $83,000 (U.S.), also included health and sewing kits. Late last month, two 20-foot containers filled with 67,200 pounds of MCC canned beef arrived in Albania, where Catholic Relief Services will distribute the food to refugees.

A 40-foot container of MCC material aid, worth $100,000, was also scheduled to sail for the Netherlands by the end of March. The aid will be trucked to refugee sites in Europe. The shipment will include comforters, sheets, winter clothing, soap, towels, canned turkey and chicken and 500 refugee kits. MCC's supply of kits is now depleted, and more will be needed for another shipment planned for later this year (see story below).

MCC, with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, is also planning a shipment of wheat, lentils, oil and sugar for Kosovo refugees in Montenegro.

In a letter to President Bill Clinton, Stephen Penner, interim MCC U.S. executive director, says attacks on Serbia are not a solution to the complex situation.

"To do nothing in the face of civilian massacres and ethnic cleansing is troubling and wrong," Penner writes. "But it is even more troubling to assume that introducing more violence can make a bad situation better."

MCC photo by Mark Beach

Sladjana and Bozho Todonc are among the number of people displaced by the ongoing conflict in the Balkans. Mennonite Central Committee has responded with material resources for other refugees in the troubled region.

"How is it that the United States keeps finding itself back in a corner where we say there is no face-saving option but to bomb?" Penner continues. "In recent months, this has been the U.S. position with respect to Iraqi President Hussein and now with Yugoslav President Milosevic. It seems that our mammoth military machine has blocked our collective vision of more creative ways to respond to conflict in the world."

That was echoed by staff of Bread of Life, MCC's primary partner organization in Serbia. In a March 25 phone call with MCC headquarters in Akron, co-director Jasmina Tosic asked, "How is it possible that the international community doesn't have more creativity to find nonviolent solutions, and how can Western Christians accept that the only way to stop a war is with more violence?"

In the weeks leading up to the bombing, Bread of Life volunteers had been busy distributing chickens and eggs to 400 elderly refugees.

MCC has no workers in Serbia, although it had in the past. Three MCC workers have assignments in Bosnia and two in Croatia.
—MCC News Service

> **How can Western Christians accept that the only way to stop a war is with more violence?**
>
> *—Jasmina Tosic*

Serbian conflict depletes refugee kit supply

After sending 500 refugee kits to Serbia last month, Mennonite Central Committee is needing more for another shipment planned for later this year. The refugee kits contain: four family-size bars of soap; one 13-ounce plastic bottle of shampoo; one box of laundry detergent, minimum of 40 ounces; two rolls of toilet paper; one family-size tube of toothpaste; four adult-size toothbrushes; one bath towel; hair brush, comb and nail clipper, one each; one box of 10 to 15 sterile gauze pads, 3 inch or 4 inch by 4 inch; one roll of half-inch adhesive tape, minimum of 10 yards; one bottle of antacid tablets, 100 tablets or more; one package of 24 sanitary napkins, maxi pads; $3 for MCC to purchase one bottle of acetaminophen. Place items in a grocery box. Contact the nearest MCC office for a collection location.—*MCC News Service*

Congregational input solicited for study to help develop vision for integrated church

NEWTON, Kan.—Integration planners this fall will turn to congregations for feedback to help create the new church out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC).

All GC, MC and CMC congregations will be invited to participate in a six-session study being developed for use this fall. The study—geared toward Sunday school classes and other small groups—will examine the new church's North American contexts, meaning of mission, congregational relationships with other congregations and the denomination, and more. Each lesson will include worship resources, a Bible study and a discussion guide. Also available will be resources for other congregational uses.

"We're trying to go back to congregations and ask the grass roots how they view themselves and the larger church relationships," says GC general secretary Jim Schrag, leader of the churchwide integration team.

Participating groups will go through the study in September and October, and their input will be compiled in November and December. The results will then go to integration planners in January 2000 as they continue developing the new church.

But the study is not only meant to guide work at the denominational levels, Schrag says. It is also intended to benefit congregations. "The process of change and transformation the church is presently undergoing is really about congregations and the viability of their ministry," he says.

The study grew last fall out of plans by both the GC, MC and CMC general boards and the mission agencies to survey church members on vision and mission of the integrated church. More details, including an outline for each of the six sessions, will be available next month. *—Rich Preheim with GCMC, MC and CMC news services*

The progress of GC-MC integration

Congregations: Approximately 152 U.S. congregations hold both GC and MC membership: 56 in Pacific Southwest Conference and 32 in Pacific Northwest Conference (the only two integrated area conferences in the United States), plus 64 in other area conferences.

Area conferences: Iowa-Nebraska, North Central (both MC) and Northern District (GC) conferences last August voted to realign into two integrated area conferences • Illinois, Indiana-Michigan, Ohio (all MC) and Central District (GC) conferences last year voted to explore integrating the conferences • Cooperative activites among Atlantic Coast, Franconia, Lancaster (all MC) and Eastern District (GC) conferences.

Visual identity: Logo for integrated Mennonite Church approved in February.

Joint statements: Among them, Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership.

The Mennonite: Integrated U.S. magazine, succeeding *The Mennonite* (GC) and *Gospel Herald* (MC), debuted February 1998 • Integrated Canadian magazine, *Canadian Mennonite,* debuted September 1997.

Mennonite Directory: Listing of all GC, MC and CMC congregations, area conferences, commissions, boards and other related organizations—including 16 interchurch or integration-related committees. Released last month, succeeding GC Handbook of Information, MC Mennonite Yearbook and CMC Directory.

Commission on Overseas Mission, Commission on Home Ministries (both GC) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MC): Joint administration of overseas programs in Latin America and Asia • Joint administration of North American programs: Mennonite Voluntary Service, Group Venture, Youth Venture and Service Adventure • Release of joint *Directory of Mennonite Missions* last September.

Commission on Education/Faith & Life Press (GC) and Mennonite Publishing House (MC): Joint labeling of all Christian education materials published by each organization • Sharing of manuscripts for review • Joint catalog to be released later this year.

Commission on Education (GC) and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MC): Joint approval of changing job descriptions and consulting on new appointments • Joint exploration of ways to provide educational support to racial/ethnic groups.

Mennonite Women: Integrated organization, succeeding Women in Mission (GC) and Women's Missionary and Service Commission (MC), created in 1997.

Mennonite Men: GC organization being promoted in some MC area conferences • Last month approved making MC congregations eligible for its Tenth Man grants for new church buildings.

AMIGA (GC) and Hispanic Mennonite Convention (MC): Hispanic Mennonite organizations held joint convention last August.

Schools: Education Integration Committee exploring future relationships of church-affiliated elementary and high schools, colleges and seminaries to new denomination.

Pastors packet: Joint monthly information and resource packet to pastors scheduled to begin this fall, succeeding *Leadership* (GC) and *Memo to Pastors* (MC).

While issues related to membership loom over the integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, the process continues at a variety of paces and at a variety of levels. This list, while hardly comprehensive, shows some areas where and how integration is proceeding —in some cases almost invisibly—in the future Mennonite Church, particularly in the United States.

Fatal accident mars youth gathering

A record number of youth attended the annual Peace-It-Together conference at Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) in Winnipeg March 12-14. But there were many empty seats when the conference began.

Travelers from Ontario were slowed when one of the two buses collided with a tow truck, killing three people in the truck. No one in the bus was seriously injured, although one passenger was hospitalized overnight for observation.

The conference drew 245 students from Canada and the United States. At the opening session, CMBC president Gerald Gerbrandt asked participants to remember in prayer the families of those killed in the accident and others involved. Conference organizers also created a memorial for the accident victims.

The conference, sponsored by CMBC, included speakers, worship, workshops and music.

AIMM-MBM photo by Karen Bontrager

Kevin Nofziger leads prayer while Eric Good plays guitar during a Feburary visit to Senegal. Also praying are Jonathan Bornman, Harriet Miller and Jim Hanes (left to right), all members of Friends of the Wolof. The Indiana-based group is working with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions in a new mission effort among Senegal's Wolof people.

Indiana prayer team makes Senegal intercession to open hearts for new mission effort's message

ELKHART, Ind.—The five American Christians didn't know how they would be received. They had gone to the West African country of Senegal to experience the culture and meet people, all to pray more effectively pray for mission efforts among Senegal's large Wolof population.

What the "Taliba Isa"—Wolof for "Disciples of Jesus"—found was overwhelming hospitality and appreciation.

The Goshen, Ind.-based Friends of the Wolof—a network of congregations, individuals and businesses—organized the weeklong February trip as part of its efforts to evangelize the Wolof. Friends of the Wolof is working with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) to send a long-term mission team to Senegal.

When one Senegalese man heard the explanation for the Americans' visit, he replied, "You are very welcome here."

"Over and over, that was the response people gave us," says Jonathan Bornman, who led the trip. He is a member of Communion Fellowship in Goshen, which is the lead congregation for Friends of the Wolof.

Another Senegalese man told Bornman that he was moved to hear the group pray before a meal, giving thanks for the food and asking a blessing on the place they were staying.

The group used "prayer walking" to focus its learning about the Wolof. Participants walked through communities, praying for the people and places they passed in an effort to see that community through God's eyes.

"We may have been the first people to come for the purpose of walking through the streets praying for God's blessing," says Eric Good, another Communion member. "We came in humility. We didn't expect to change everything in three days. The purpose was to listen, pray, be obedient, love people and be the light of Christ to them."

Several Senegalese listened through the door and windows during the group's nightly worship times. One man asked to come in and listen. Once inside, he asked about the meaning of the songs and expressed the warmth the music brought to his heart.

The Wolof people make up more than a third of Senegal's population and have embraced Islam since the 10th century. A century of Christian mission efforts has had little impact, and there are only a few Wolof believers.

"There has not been a witness of the radiant light of Jesus in this area," Bornman says, "and there won't be without a team of people who worship, visit and pray."

Adds Good, "It is only through the power of prayer that hearts are going to be changed."

Three members of Friends of the Wolof have already moved to Senegal, and six more are planning to join them later this year. Friends of the Wolof provides financial and prayer support, while AIMM provides administrative support.—*Bethany Swope for AIMM and MBM news services*

Couple discovers the world in Buffalo

New program offers introduction to urban ministry

BUFFALO, N.Y.—Derek and Vicky Martin dreamed of serving as missionaries in Africa. But as the newlyweds from Ontario examined service opportunities, the only option available was less than 100 miles from home.

Nevertheless in Buffalo, a metropolitan area of 1.1 million people on the U.S.-Canadian border, the Martins have discovered that the world has come to them.

The Martins last September became the first participants in a pilot program of Urban Leadership Quest, a new initiative of Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) to allow individuals to test a call to urban ministry.

Derek and Vicky Martin

Serving under the auspices of Mennonite-related Westside Church of the Living Word, the Martins for 11 months are living at and managing Welcome House, temporary single-family housing for refugees being resettled in the United States.

"My aunt and uncle had lived for 15 to 20 years in Africa, in Zambia, as missionaries," Derek says. "My grandparents were always very supportive of them. I thought I wanted to do it myself."

But in Buffalo, Vicky says, "We are realizing there are lots of mission fields in North America." She serves three days a week with Journey's End, a refugee resettlement ministry with offices in Westside's church building—a former TV station.

In the inner-city Upper West Side neighborhood where the congregation is located, more than 30,000 Hispanics, most of them Puerto Rican, live alongside 4,000 Mohawk, Seneca and Oneida along with recent refugees: Kurds, Iraqis, Cambodians, Laotians, Vietnamese, Ethiopians, Rwandans, Somalis and Sudanese.

Derek uses his training as a carpenter and certified electrician in renovating Welcome House and managing the church building. This spring, he will help the congregation begin a nonprofit neighborhood home-repair program that will train people in construction skills as it improves local housing stock. He also tutors and befriends neighborhood children through a congregational program. Westside has a membership of 30 and a regular worship attendance of nearly 100.

The Martins' duties appear very similar to the usual voluntary service assignment—except they spend one day per week in study and reflection on issues related to ministry in the city. That may be through a class at Houghton College's Pastoral and Church Ministries Program in Buffalo or in more personalized independent study, such as reading and discussing Ron Sider's book *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger.*

"The program is intended to provide people who are interested in urban ministry with an opportunity to try it out, to live in the city," says John Powell, MBM director for Evangelism and Church Development, who is based in Buffalo.

Urban Leadership Quest, for people 18 and older, seeks to meet a need ignored by existing service programs: to help urban congregations recruit and develop leaders for the growing challenge of urban ministry. Next year, for the first time in history, more than half of the world's population will live in urban centers. And that figure is expected to grow to 80 percent in the next century.

"Our main goal is to train and send people into urban ministry," says Shirley Powell, a Westside elder and director of Westside Ministries, which oversees Urban Leadership Quest in Buffalo. "We hope they'll stay here or go somewhere else in an urban area. …We don't expect everyone to stay."

MBM hopes to have two Urban Leadership Quest locations operating at full capacity by the fall of 2000: the Buffalo site plus one in Miami. The Miami unit is being developed in collaboration with Homestead (Fla.) Mennonite Church and Miami's Amor Viviente congregation.—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

The program is intended to provide people who are interested in urban ministry with an opportunity to try it out, to live in the city.

—John Powell

Would you drop a bomb on this child?

Then why do you pay someone who would?

All citizens are required to pay for war through their taxes. The Peace Tax Fund would allow people opposed to war because of deeply-held moral or religious beliefs to stop paying for it. They could pay their full taxes into a fund that would be used for non-military purposes only.

For more information, contact:

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR A PEACE TAX FUND
2121 Decatur Place NW
Washington DC 20008-1923
(202) 483-3751

by the way ...

Five General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations have memberships of more than 1,000: First, Winnipeg, 1,306; Bethesda, Henderson, Neb., 1,127; First, Berne, Ind., 1,109; College, Goshen, Ind., 1,063; Calvary Community, Hampton, Va., 1,040. —*Mennonite Directory*

Historical essay contest winners announced

GOSHEN, Ind.—The winners of the 1998 John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest have been announced by the Historical Committee and Archives of the Mennonite Church.

Seminary and graduate school: first, Margot Kottelin-Longley, Abo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, "An Anabaptist Confession of Faith, 1527"; second, Natasha Sawatsky, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., "Die Gelehrten der Verkehrten: Medieval Memory of the Eucharist in 16th-Century Northern Europe"; third, Jennifer Graber, Emory University, Atlanta, "Hymnals of the Mennonite Church as Reflections of Changing American Mennonite Identity, 1900-1969."

Undergraduate: first, Tamara Sawatzky, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., "The Russian Mennonite Experience Through the Eyes of J.P. Klassen"; second, Richard Sieber, Goshen (Ind.) College, "Moving the Masses: George Lambert and the Push for Mennonite Missions, 1897-1898"; third, Shasta Schmidt, Bethel College, "The Makings of a Mennonite Millennial Migration: Claas Epp and the Great Trek to Central Asia."

High school: first, Jonathan Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg, Va., "A Brief Exploration of the Differences in Growth Between Mainline and Conservative Mennonite Groups"; second, Zach Swartley, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, Lansdale, Pa., "The Enigma of Amish Youth"; third, Ben Beachy, Eastern Mennonite High School, "Dare to Take the Lead: Dr. Myron Augsburger."

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CMC names new general secretary

WINNIPEG—Dan Nighswander, conference minister for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, has been selected as the general secretary of the proposed Mennonite Church Canada, beginning in August. He will succeed Helmut Harder, who is retiring after nine years as CMC general secretary.

Nighswander has pastored congregations in Ontario and held positions in the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. He holds a doctorate in New Testament studies from the University of Toronto and a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.—*CMC News Service*

MBM tops budget for first time in six years

ELKHART, Ind.—For the first time in six years, contributions to Mennonite Board of Missions exceeded budget. MBM received $5.12 million for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, up 6 percent over the previous year. In addition, annual commitments from congregations, groups and individuals to support specific ministries surpassed $1 million for the first time.

"We are encouraged by the fresh energy and the interest in the Mennonite Church for a new era of mission," says MBM president Stanley Green. "Instead of only looking back to the 'golden days,' we are looking forward with great hope and vision for the possibilities before us."—MBM News Service

New dorm option available for St. Louis 99

NEWTON, Kan.—Planners for the St. Louis 99 convention have found another option for those wishing to stay in dormitory rooms. The University of Missouri-St. Louis was to be the site of the majority of dorm rooms. But that became unavailable after the convention forms were printed. The new option is Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, about 20 miles northeast of St. Louis. Prices and features are comparable to the University of Missouri-St. Louis.—*GCMC-MC news services*

Two Herald Press books receive recognition

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Two books published by Herald Press have received Angel Awards, presented by Excellence in Media to recognize media efforts reinforcing strong moral values. The Herald Press award winners were *A Simple Christmas: Hundreds of Ways to Bring Christ Back Into Christmas* by Alice Chapin and *As a Little Child* by Grace Moyer Frounfelker.

Births

Anders, Craig Taylor, Feb. 15, to Devon and Teresa (Brooks) Anders, Harrisonburg, Va.
Brenneman, Mikayla Lynn, Jan. 22, to Ryan and Sherri Brenneman, Greeley, Colo.
Brooner, Alexis Johanna, March 3, to Barbara and John Dotson-Brooner, Harrisonburg, Va.
Christensen, Jacob Anders, Feb. 25, to Jeff and Sherri (Stjernholm) Christensen, Superior, Colo.
Colgin, Autumn Nichole, Feb. 26, to Craig and Gloria (Mullet) Colgin, Shipshewana, Ind.
Cripe, Ty Joseph, March 19, to Bryan and Kathy (Yoder) Cripe, Middlebury, Ind.
Estes, Parker Cole, Feb. 25, to Kristin (Schlabach) and Stacey Estes, Dayton, Va.
Gant, Sara Ann, March 8, to Erwin and Mary (Tibbs) Gant, Ambler, Pa.
Goshow, Justin Clarke, March 2, to Clarke and Mary (Posen) Goshow, Harleysville, Pa.
Hartzler, Nathan Alan, March 15, to Alan and Staci (Stuckey) Hartzler, Pettisville, Ohio.
Hunsberger, Kelsey Camila, Jan. 20, to Daniel and Mariella (Catalan) Hunsberger, Boswell, Pa.
Hurst, Briana Lynn, March 6, to Amanda (Yelle) and Michael Hurst, East Earl, Pa.
Kauffman, Logan Ranae, Feb. 23, to Jodi (Burton) and Roger Kauffman, Gibson City, Ill.
Kiser, Meghan Nicole, Jan. 25, to Danielle (Tate) and Randy Kiser, Harrisonburg, Va.
Miller, Elizabeth Ann, Feb. 14, to Kris Miller, Middlebury, Ind.
Pauls, Nathan Thomas, Feb. 24, to Donna (Groff) and Jeffrey Pauls, Kinzers, Pa.
Roth, Jordan Kent, Feb. 28, to Gwendolyn (Boll) and Jeff Roth, Hesston, Kan.
Saalfrank, Caitlin Alyse, March 14, to Lisa (Liechty) and Michael Saalfrank, Perkasie, Pa.
Schroeder, Jessica Lynn, Feb. 12, to Elma and Hans Schroeder, Steinbach, Man.
Strite, Aidan Leon, March 7, to Kevin and Michelle (Kaufman) Strite, Harrisonburg, Va.
Swihart, Skyler Cheyenne, March 1, to Jason and Tiffany (Slabaugh) Swihart, Hydro, Okla.
Vasher, Emma Danielle, March 12, to Dan and Linda (Smith) Vasher, Morenci, Mich.
Wall, Chloe Noelle, Jan. 27, to Tim and Zoann (Haarer) Wall, Goshen, Ind.
Wittmer, Brook Elizabeth, March 3, to Shaun and Trishea (Yoder) Wittmer, Hartville, Ohio.
Yoder, Lewton Steven, Feb. 26, to Helen (Miller) and Marlin Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.
Yoder, Melissa Jean, Feb. 20, to Emily (Yoder) and Shawn Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Marriages

Askins/Augsburger: Erika Askins, Sarasota, Fla., and Keith Augsburger, Sarasota, March 13 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.
Brenneman/Harrison: Jeremy Brenneman, Springs, Pa., and Amber Harrison, Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 13 at Capital Area Christian Church, Enola, Pa.
Brubacher/Yoder: Philip Brubacher, Sarasota, Fla., and Sheila Yoder, Sarasota, Jan. 23 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.
Carpenter/Whaley: Norman Carpenter, Phoenix, and Melissa Whaley, Phoenix, March 13 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.
Chow/Hess: Grace Chow, Lancaster, Pa., and Fred Hess, Lancaster, Feb. 20 at Neffsville Mennonite Church, Lancaster.
Fetterman/Short: Lueen Fetterman, Wauseon, Ohio and Doyle Short, Archbold, Ohio, March 6 at Archbold.
Fritz/Plakans: Kristine Fritz, Lancaster, Pa., and Edward Plakans, Lancaster, March 6 at Neffsville Mennonite Church, Lancaster.
Gilbert/Nofziger: Jerry Gilbert, Bryan, Ohio, and Sheryl Nofziger, Wauseon, Ohio, March 13 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.
Hartzler/Peachey: Ben Hartzler, Belleville, Pa., and Jenny Peachey, Belleville, March 20 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.
Kuhns/Swartley: Kris Anne Kuhns, Blooming Glen, Pa., and Jon Swartley, Silverdale, Pa., March 13.
Muth/Thieszen: Shelby Muth, Grand Island, Neb., and David Thieszen, Henderson, Neb., March 6 at First United Methodist Church, Grand Island.
Pinnicks/Schlabach: Jolene Pinnicks, Fredericksburg, Ohio, and Karl Schlabach, Sugarcreek, Ohio, March 13 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Start a new ministry

Palmer Becker thought he wanted to be a farmer. One day his uncle tapped him on the shoulder. “Palmer, when are you going to stop feeding pigs and start feeding people?” Now, after 40 years in church ministry, Palmer Becker has started another chapter in his life. He is director of the Hesston College Pastoral Ministries program.

> *“Now might be the time to start the most exciting chapter in your life—pastoral ministry. It’s a privilege to enter the sacred places of people’s lives, to walk with them, and to help them know who they are and where they’re going.” —Palmer Becker*

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Deaths

Baumgartner, Emma, 80, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Ivan Baumgartner (deceased). Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Eberly Hunsberger (deceased). Survivors: daughter Margaret Rippey; three grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 11 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Claassen, Edward, 94, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 27. Survivors: children Edward, Harold, Charles, Liz McKim, Clara Kerekes; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren, four stepgreat-grandchildren; one stepgreat-great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 1 at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Delagrange, Irene Leichty, 82, Millersburg, Ind., died March 12. Spouse: (1st) John Delagrange (deceased); (2nd) Joseph Delagrange (deceased). Parents: Sam and Clara Harshberger Leichty (deceased). Survivors: children Clara Bender, Marvin, Allen, Gerald, Elvin, Harold; 20 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Egli, Arthur, 81, Goshen, Ind., died March 3 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Arlene Blake Egli. Parents: John and Emma Good Egli (deceased). Other survivors: children John, David, James; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Farney, Shirley Zehr, 71, Croghan, N.Y., died March 5 of cirrhosis of the liver. Spouse: Perry Farney. Parents: Ernest and Lydia Lehman Zehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Jon, Denise Bowen; four grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.

Groff, Elizabeth, 94, Lancaster, Pa., died Feb. 28. Parents: John and Anna Brackbill Groff (deceased). Funeral: March 4 at Kinzer Mennonite Church, Ronks, Pa.

Hartzler, Dorothy Yocum, 78, Belleville, Pa., died Feb. 20. Spouse: Fred Hartzler (deceased), Parents: Harvey and Clara Russell Yocum (deceased). Foster parents: John and Katie Kanagy (deceased). Survivors: children Julia Alleman, Audrey Eby; four grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 24 at Belleville.

Janzen, Bernice Ethel, 77, Goessel, Kan., died March 8. Parents: Dietrich and Lena Schmidt Janzen (deceased). Funeral: March 11 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Landes, Jonathan, 91, Collegeville, Pa., died March 2 of a heart attack. Spouse: Sallie Weller Landes (deceased). Parents: Henry and Lizzie Smith Landes (deceased). Survivors: children Miriam Souder, Grace Freed, Irene Hunsberger, Elizabeth, Rachel German, Doris Hunsberger, Edith, Ethel Pennington, Paulette Moyer; 33 grandchildren; 41 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Upper Skippack Mennonite Church, Skippack, Pa.

Oesch, Harold Leslie, 87, Kalispell, Mont., died Feb. 27 from complications of lymphoma and heart condition. Spouse: Mary Lapp Oesch. Parents: John and Mary Oesch (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Brenneman, Don, Duane, Glenn; 16 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 2 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell.

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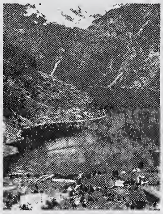

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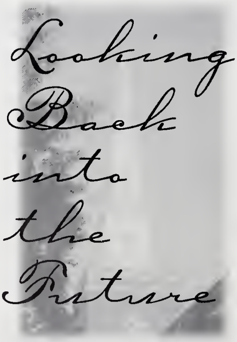

June 3–6, 1999

A national conference, Church Music: Looking Back into the Future, for pastors, church musicians, academic musicians and laypersons interested in crafting a thoughtful future for music in the church will be held at Messiah College June 3–6, 1999. The conference is sponsored by the Louisville Institute, the Boyer Center, and in cooperation with the Calvin College Institute for Christian Worship. Scholars and practitioners will gather to discuss issues most vital to effective music ministry, using historical and current resources of the Christian tradition. Teams of church leaders and academic musicians who will work together following the conference are encouraged to attend.

Registration is $150 per person, including all meals. A discount of $50 per person is available to teams of three or more if registration is paid as a group. For conference materials and registration information, contact the Boyer Center or visit the web site at www.boyercenter.org.

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classifieds

- **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich., seeks ***summer program director***. Experience in Christian camping, teaching or youth ministry desirable. Contact brian@amigocentre.org or call 616-651-2811.

- **Medical doctors:** Sylvia Klauser, Ph.D. student at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, seeks medical doctors for a short survey about an ***Anabaptist perspective in biomedical ethics***. Volunteers please contact sklaus2@hotmail.com or s.m.klauser@sms.ed.ac.uk

- **Manheim Christian Day School** needs ***4th grade teacher***. Send resumes to Crist Peachey, principal, Manheim Christian Day School, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Menno-Hof** seeks ***visitor center manager***. This full-time position carries the responsibilities of day-to-day operations of this popular tourist educational center. Commitment to ministry and good people skills are central. Please write or call for job description. Menno-Hof, P.O. Box 701, Shipshewana, IN 46565; 219-768-4117.

- **Seattle Mennonite Church:** full-time ***youth pastor***. Active urban church seeks energetic, creative individual to expand youth program at Seattle Mennonite Church. Commitment to Anabaptist teachings, great communication skills and B.A. in youth ministry or equivalent experience required. Contact Eileen Crawford, 206-523-2161 or email camila@gte.net

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, a K-8 accredited school with 460 students located in suburban Lancaster, Pa., has an immediate opening for a ***5th grade teacher***. Contact Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; 717-394-7107; fax 717-394-4944.

- **Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp** needs ***caretaker:*** semi-retired couple to handle general maintenance and cleaning at growing camp in south central Pennsylvania. Housing provided. Should have some mechanical ability.

  Send resume to Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp, Caretaker Search, 5357 Little Cove Rd., Mercersburg, PA 17236; 717-328-3055.

- **Glencroft Retirement Community** in Glendale, Ariz., seeks a ***licensed administrator*** to lead its 225-bed health care center. Candidates should have a successful track record in large facilities, excellent communications skills, ability to lead in a team setting, and an appreciation for the mission of a church-related, not-for-profit organization.

  Applicants should send their resume to Jenny Yoder, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***assistant principal.*** Full-time position requires leadership abilities in the areas of curriculum scheduling, daily school management and student relationships.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions in the 1999-2000 school year: ***guidance counselor*** (half-time position); ***athletic director***: one-year sabbatical leave fill-in position, responsible for the administration of a 14-sport athletic program; ***art teacher; mathematics teacher; physical education teacher***.

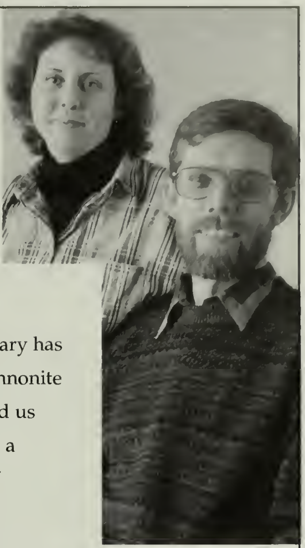
  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Central Christian School** (6-12), Kidron, Ohio, is searching for an ***assistant principal*** with leadership skills (curriculum, management, evaluation, student relationships) to provide day-to-day management. This person would also serve on the leadership team. Also searching for high school ***industrial arts and technology*** instructors.

  Send resumes or direct calls to Frederic Miller, Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-7311; email CCHS_fmiller@tccsa.ohio.gov

- ***Opportunities for service!*** **Eastern Mennonite Missions** has opportunities for youth to retirees to serve overseas in ministries that include teaching, leadership development, church planting and community development, for one or more years. A few of our current needs include leadership development among the Maasai in Kenya, and teachers for missionary children in Asia.

  If God is nudging you to find out more, please call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.



"Meeting other students here at the seminary has connected us with the Mennonite church globally and helped us realize overseas mission is a possibility for our family."

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Sharon Brown, AMBS student

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- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8th grade multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has classroom-teaching positions available. We are in search of classroom teachers for the ***kindergarten and 1st/2nd-grade*** classrooms. These are full-time voluntary service positions. Housing, health insurance, living expenses and personal stipend are provided. Applicants with teacher training and experience will be given preference. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 16, 1999.

  For more information or to request application materials, contact Marv Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

Moving? Please allow six weeks for change of address. Call 800-790-2498. Or email <theMennonite@mph.org>.

classifieds

- **Hesston College** seeks applicants for ***aviation program director*** and ***chief flight instructor***. Responsibilities include student advising, program evaluation, budget monitoring and control, hiring of flight instructors and oversight of fleet maintenance. Qualifications: commitment to Hesston College and Mennonite higher education and FAA instructor ratings for instrument and multiengine.

  To apply, send resume and references to academic dean Marc Yoder, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8206 or email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Kraybill Mennonite School** is seeking applicants for the following faculty openings beginning 1990-2000 school year:
  Media center coordinator (librarian)
  Special education
  Grades 6-8 music and ***Bible teacher***
  Part-time curriculum coordinator

  Kraybill has 417 students enrolled in grades K-8. Contact John Weber, 717-653-5236, for an application, or send resume to 598 Kraybill Church Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

- **Goshen College** has openings for two ***residence hall directors*** beginning August 1999 for 9 1/2-month contracts. Bachelor's degree required (master's degree preferred) with a minimum of two years of post-baccalaureate-related work experience. Members of under-represented groups and women are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

  Send letter of application, resume and three letters of reference to Anita Stalter Lapp, acting vice president for student affairs, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7543; fax 219-535-7660; email anitakl@goshen.edu. Applications are encouraged through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu. Application deadline: May 1, 1999.

- **Tel Hai Retirement Community** is seeking an ***administrator*** for its residential living program. The position is responsible for oversight and coordination of all residential living activities including: successful implementation of marketing strategies, effective supervision of staff, management of physical facilities, coordination of services and operation within budget parameters. Successful candidate will be experienced in marketing/admissions, possess supervisor interpersonal abilities, and be familiar with issues of aging in a residential setting. Bachelor's degree in health administration, social services or related human services field is preferred. Tel Hai offers competitive wages and a great benefit package, which includes vacation, 401k retirement plan, education scholarship for employees and dependents, etc.

  Interested applicants should apply to Human Resource Department, Tel Hai Retirement Community, P.O. Box 190, Honey Brook, PA 19344; 610-273-9333. EOE M/F/V/D

- **Bluffton College** seeks the following:

  Director, The Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center: 12-month, half-time director of the center for peace education through arts and literature for children. The center, which has received numerous awards, operates under the administrative auspices of Bluffton College. Qualifications include a commitment to peace education, creative vision and entrepreneurial/management skills. Master's degree preferred. Position opens July 1, 1999.

  Executive assistant to the president—Bluffton College: 12-month, mid-management position beginning July 1, 1999. Responsibilities include managing special projects and supervising select programs. Master's degree required.

  Applicants are welcome from qualified candidates who respect the Anabaptist-Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Consideration of applications begins immediately. A letter of application, resume and three letters of reference may be sent to the President's Office, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817. For additional information see www.bluffton.edu. EOE

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June 28-July 2	Teaming & Collaboration
July 5-9	Middle School/High School Instructional Strategies
July 12-16	Conflict Resolution & Peacemaking in Educational Settings
July 19-23	Second Language Learners
July 26-30	Adolescent Literature
Aug. 2-6	Adapting Curriculum for Diverse Learners
Aug. 10-12	Developmental Spelling

What type of school are you paying for?

by Chris Lubienski

When Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan and Dorothy Kazel were being raped and murdered in El Salvador in 1980 because of their work with the poor, they probably didn't know that U.S. tax money went for the training of their attackers.

In fact, when the United Nations Truth Commission cited five officers for perpetrating this atrocity on the U.S. churchwomen, it was a simple matter to find that three of the officers had been trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA), now located in Fort Benning, Ga. The officers were on the list of graduates of this tax-funded school. So were two of the three officers cited in the murder of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero and 10 of the 12 officers named in the massacre of over 900 civilians in the village of El Mozote, El Salvador. The list of atrocities throughout Latin America goes on and on.

While most Americans are unaware of SOA's existence, many Latin Americans know it as the "School of the Assassins" because of its legacy regarding clergy, teachers, the indigenous, union members, the poor and anyone who dares to seek justice. The U.S. government justifies the school on the grounds that it spreads democracy in Latin America, and the Army repeatedly denied that the SOA teaches tactics that contravene accepted standards of human rights—that is, until the *Washington Post* obtained copies of the school's Spanish-language training manual that instructed students in execution, torture, assassination, false imprisonment and other practices. Since then a former instructor has come out against the school, confirming that this was indeed the nature of the curriculum.

On Nov. 16, 1989, six Jesuit priests, their cook and her 15-year-old daughter were murdered at the Central American University in San Salvador. Of the 26 officers found to be responsible, 19 were SOA graduates.

Every November in the years following, people of faith have gathered annually at the gates of SOA to call for its closing. They come to participate in a vigil to commemorate these and the many other victims of SOA graduates. Many people "cross the line" onto Fort Benning property in a solemn procession to reach the students at the school, carrying crosses inscribed with the names of known victims. Military police meet these peacemakers and take them into custody. MPs have directed people in the procession to "lay down your cross and follow me."

The act of civil disobedience is not without cost. Authorities have sought to make an example of some. They have handed out the maximum penalty of six months in prison and thousands of dollars in fines to those who have returned to the scene of the crime for the second year (or more) to join the procession. Last year, 27 people received such sentences. Roy Bourgeois, a Vietnam veteran and Maryknoll priest who started the vigils, has spent four years in prison altogether. Still people keep coming.

In 1997, approximately 2,000 people came to call for the closure of the school, and 601 of them joined the procession onto the base. Organizers hoped that possibly 1,000 people would make such a decision in 1998. Instead, about 7,000 attended the vigil, and more than 2,300 joined the procession onto Fort Benning (see *The Mennonite*, Dec. 8, 1998, page 16).

A few years ago in Guatemala, Sarah, my wife, and I stayed with a woman whose husband had been killed by the military during the height of repression in the early 1980s. As we were leaving, Sarah asked her if she wanted us to say anything to our church family in the United States. Quietly she asked that we stop teaching war and spending money that brings violence and misery to so many people.

As Mennonites, we are concerned that our tax money not be used to perpetrate violence. As Americans, from our positions of safety and security, we can call our government to account on the use of this money for such training.

As Mennonites, we are concerned that our tax money not be used to perpetrate violence. As Americans, from our positions of safety and security, we can call our government to account on the use of this money for such training. Unlike the four U.S. churchwomen raped and murdered in El Salvado, we know that our tax dollars are funding such "education," and we can do something about it.

This May 1-4, vigils at the Pentagon will call for the closure of SOA. In November, if necessary, people of faith will again gather at the gates of Fort Benning, Ga. Contact SOA Watch at 706-682-5369 or www.soaw.org.

Chris Lubienski is a member of Westside Church of the Living Word (Mennonite), Buffalo, N.Y.

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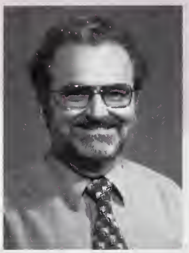

J. Lorne Peachey

The sin of indecent composure

Have nothing to do with stupid and senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.—2 Timothy 2:23

Exactly what Paul had in mind when he wrote the words above he never said. Were he writing today, he might be referring to the way we U.S. Mennonites tie ourselves into knots over whether we should pay that portion of our taxes that goes for military purposes.

As April 15 approaches, all of us are busy figuring out how much we have paid or how much we owe in federal income taxes. At the same time, prophets like Steve Ratzlaff (page 8) stir us up with: "We Mennonites are sick. We are schizophrenic when it comes to taxes that go for war."

Strong words, those. And we want to argue back. We cite Romans 13:7—"Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due." Or we point out that Jesus said we should give to the government what belongs to the government and to God what belongs to God (Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17, Luke 20:25).

Once we worked together to achieve conscientious objection to war with our bodies. Might the same be possible again in the matter of money that goes to fund destruction?

Meanwhile, as Marian Franz writes (page 5), we have these frightening statistics: The U.S. government spends $8,271 *per second* for defense and war, much of it generated from our tax dollars. At the same time, 32,000 of the world's children die *every day* (try eating dinner with that image parading across your TV screen); $8,271 per second would go a long way toward buying the food and medicine to keep these children alive.

Franz says we Christians, especially we pacifist Mennonite Christians, are much too calm in the face of such misuse of money. Indecent composure, she calls it. Again, we want to argue, to defend, to rationalize.

If only Jesus had been more clear when he talked about taxes. If only he had spelled out in more detail exactly what was Caesar's and what was God's. But Jesus didn't do that, perhaps to avoid what is also today's temptation: to argue ourselves into paralysis and inaction. In the face of the world's dying needs, that is not only indecent, it is also sin. Paul would also tell us it is "stupid and senseless."

We must do something about all this, even though we don't agree on whether to pay all our taxes because of how they are used. Whatever our viewpoint, to be consistent as peacemakers, we must take some action about the fact that a portion of our money every year goes to support death rather than life. Each of us must do something to call attention to the injustices of an obscene military budget large enough for a half million Hiroshimas.

For some of us, right action will be to reduce our incomes so we don't need to pay taxes. Others of us will find it in withholding that portion of our taxes—now 43 percent—that goes for past and present military expenditures. All of us can get behind the push for a peace tax fund —sending letters and emails to our legislators, including notes with our federal income tax returns, sending donations to those who are working to have the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill turned into law. Together, each making the point in our own way, we can make a difference.

Mennonites—even after we are merged, even were we to garner the agreement and support of all Anabaptist groups in the United States—are only a small minority in the total conglomerate of this nation's Christians. But that didn't keep us from speaking up earlier this century and achieving legal recognition for conscientious objection to war with our bodies. Then we could set aside our differences and our controversies to work for the good of all. Might the same be possible again in the matter of money that goes to fund war and destruction?

"The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone," Paul continues (2 Timothy 2:24a). His challenge is good for today, calling us to go beyond our disagreements about war taxes and do something about 32,000 children who die every day in a world defended by a U.S. military spending $8,271 per second. Who knows what the results of some decent agitation could be?—*jlp*

the Mennonite

April 13, 1999

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haircut evangelism

8 Facing exhaustion in southern Africa
10 Agencies begin to help Kosovar refugees
11 Number of pastoral candidates down
20 'Whatever!' A new vision for a new church

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Membership and the media

I was disappointed that the Mennonite press was deliberately excluded from the Kansas City consultation on membership. As one who has been both a journalist and an administrator in a church institution, I understand the interests of both the consultation leaders and the journalists and know that they sometimes compete and conflict with each other at critical points. It is precisely because I understand both sides that I think some kind of compromise might have been worked out to make it possible for a press presence at the consultation.

For future consideration, I propose the following as talking points for such a compromise: (1) The Mennonite press could have been invited to send one representative to cover the event. (2) That person might have been invited to participate in the process and not just fill the role of observer-reporter. (3) This person might have also agreed not to directly quote anyone from the consultation proceedings without their permission. In fact, conversation at the group tables might have been treated as off the record.

I am writing with the assumption that the people present at this consultation were there as representatives of the rest of us and were not there just to speak for themselves. This means they are accountable to the rest of us for their participation in such a process of group discernment, and the rest of us have some right to wonder what really went on—the process as well as the outcome. The press could have helped assure the rest of us that our interests were being taken into consideration.—*Richard A. Kauffman, Winfield, Ill.*

Your story "Consultation on Membership and Homosexuality Finds Little Common Ground on Disciplined Churches" (March 23) stated the consultation "drew two or three representatives from every U.S. and Canadian area conference." There was no one present from the Puerto Rico Conference, which, though small and geographically at a distance, should not be overlooked in references to conferences of the Mennonite Church.

I also think you could avoid generating ill will toward the church leadership's decision not to invite the press to this consultation if you would explain the reason for the exclusion: to provide a safe place for people to share their concerns. It should also be noted that this was recommended by the facilitators, people experienced in communal discernment. This lack of information causes people to make assumptions and arrive at uninformed conclusions about leadership.—*Miriam Martin, Mennonite Church General Board, East Earl, Pa.*

The evening before the March 23 issue arrived with its coverage of the membership consultation, one of the consultation's participants gave a helpful report on the event to our congregation. I am grateful that we had the opportunity to hear that report. I feel regret for those whose first and perhaps only exposure to the content of the consultation will come from the March 23 article. Obscured by a headline which heralds finding "little common ground" on one particular point and buried three-quarters of the way down in the article is the brief report of six "findings of significant agreement." These were not the only accomplishments of the meeting but perhaps represent the most fully processed thoughts to emerge. The article's conflated and abridged version of the areas of agreement distorts the six carefully worded findings as reported in official release from the consultation. Could you not have provided the six findings verbatim in a sidebar or box?

You cite a good variety of individuals in the article, but noticeably absent is any comment from the facilitators. Their perspective and assessment would be of great interest to me. I would also welcome more insight from those present as to the spirit of the meeting. I hope that there will be alternate reporting of this

Kansas City consultation's six 'findings of significant agreement'

1. The (integrated) Mennonite Church desires to be a channel of God's transforming grace to all people, including people of same-sex orientation.
2. The Mennonite Church desires to be a place where all individuals, including those of same-sex orientation, are free to share their deepest struggles and find healing and hope.
3. The invitation to membership and full participation in the life of the Mennonite Church is offered to all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, regardless of sexual orientation.
4. We welcome people who are in same-sex relationships to attend Mennonite churches, and we offer the resources of pastoral ministry to such persons.
5. Extending the invitation to membership to people in same-sex relationships is not in keeping with the faith statements of the Mennonite Church.
6. Conferences need clear procedures for engagement in mutual discernment with congregations that appear to be diverging from scriptural teachings and our Mennonite confession and thus raise controversial issues.

theMennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999— by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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y readers say

event in the pages of your publication or in other venues which will convey a better sense of the nature and content of the consultation, communicating fully and accurately the areas of agreement and some of the other directions explored.—*Joe Springer, Goshen, Ind.*

Editor's note: For the consultation's six "findings of significant agreement," see page 2.

The six "findings of significant agreement" from the Kansas City consultation show a bias opposed to homosexual people. Five findings gratuitously add same-sex orientation. The sixth is a warning to congregations.

Why is it not enough for the new Mennonite Church to be a channel of grace to all people, to allow all individuals to share their deepest struggles and find healing and hope? To add same-orientation to the second finding makes "healing and hope" adversarial, as if homosexuals alone need it, and makes this vision statement suspect from now on. Membership and full participation are granted to all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, regardless of sexual orientation. Then the resources of pastoral ministry are offered "to such persons" (evidently because they specially need it), then it is all taken back by saying that such open invitation to membership for those in same-sex relationships is not in keeping with the faith statements of the church.

Fortunately, these findings are not binding. Would that they had been loosing. They could have been had they refused exclusionary bias, had they assured gay friends that they are welcome and have been a blessing in our churches. By this pastor's lights, their membership has in no way indicated a diverging from scriptural teachings, even if lately a Mennonite confession has stated the contrary.—*Donald R. Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.*

Cover photo
by Dale D. Gehman

That haunting prayer

The prayer of Jesus "that they may be one as we are one" (John 17:11) has challenged and haunted us for many years. We have had the privilege of working closely with many brothers and sisters from other Mennonite denominations and have been blessed by these associations. The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church have shared in many programs, have adopted the same confession of faith and taken important steps toward organizational unity.

In July, the two denominations will hold a joint meeting in St. Louis at which time we will consider next steps. There are important unresolved polity questions, legitimate concerns and unholy fears, but our hope and prayer is that we can take that next step and, guided by the Spirit, go forward as one into the next century. But if we need more time—well, we'll keep praying that haunting prayer of Jesus and have faith that when we are ready the Holy Spirit will show us the way.—*Luke and Verna Birky, Goshen, Ind.*

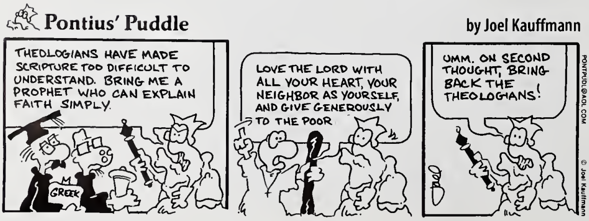
Information, please

Overall, the March 23 issue was, like most issues, quite impressive. I have grave concerns, however, with By the Way: "During World War II, 35,000-37,000 Mennonites from the Soviet Union were resettled in Germany by the Nazis." It presents a disturbing yet isolated factoid without any accompanying historical or social context within which to interpret it.

I presume that these resettled Mennonites, who probably were of German ancestry, would have been an uncomfortable and suspect minority in the Soviet Union, an Allied power at war with Axis Germany. But it's still upsetting to think that such Mennonites would have been pawns, whether willing or unwitting, in the Nazis' nationalistic vision of racial "purity."

The factoid, which describes a presumably amicable interaction between Nazis and Mennonites, does not hint at the moral problems associated with this sad collusion. Since you have not presented any exonerating historical facts to the contrary, I am left to infer many unpleasant things about the Mennonites who accepted Nazi assistance in immigrating to Germany during World War II: These Mennonite emigres were dupes who are a sorry example of the failure of social ethics and complicity with immorality which can result from an insular "quiet in the land" theology; or perhaps they gave tacit consent to Nazi policies, since these Mennonites may have been moved into areas abandoned by exterminated groups. The general problems associated with the former have been addressed by the more outward shift in late-20th century Mennonite theology and ethics. But if the latter case is true, perhaps an article on this topic is in order. You've piqued this reader's concern and interest.—*Jalane Schmidt, Somerville, Mass.*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


THEOLOGIANS HAVE MADE SCRIPTURE TOO DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND. BRING ME A PROPHET WHO CAN EXPLAIN FAITH SIMPLY.
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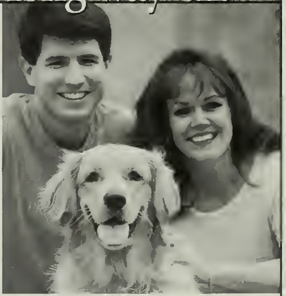
Differing over differences

May I humbly beg to differ with Rich Preheim's editorial of March 9 ("The Golden Challenge of Right Relations")? He wrote, "Hostilities threaten to rend the fabric of that which holds us together." Which hostilities is he referring to? I honestly do not know of any hostilities within the Mennonite body. Am I naive? Or has he believed the lie of the world, especially the secular humanists who make great noises and trumpet their causes with great fanfare. Then when a Christian dares to disagree with them, we get accused of being narrow-minded, hateful and mean-spirited. Can't we disagree without hostilities. I thought we did. Disagree passionately? Perhaps.

Preheim also wrote, "Others' positions, *if they are built on sound foundations* [emphasis mine], cannot be denigrated simply because they don't conform to our own … interpretations." I contacted him to find out what differences he had in mind, and he cited several: "women in leadership, Christian activism, political involvement, worship styles, money, integration, homosexuality—virtually anything over which earnest, sincere believers may disagree." Let's be careful how we view these differences. Most of them are not moral conflicts at all but simply personal tastes or preferences. But the homosexual issue is a moral issue and not based on a sound biblical foundation at all. Let's not lump all our different opinions in the same category; they are vastly different in their gravity. God, grant us wisdom to see the difference.—*Wilmer Sprunger, Berne, Ind.*

Our retirement seems like a long way off.

Do we need to be concerned about it now?



Yes! Begin planning, saving and investing now so you can be better prepared for the future. What you need to do depends on your age and the lifestyle you'd like to maintain after retiring.

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Dale D. Gehman

Mission worker Skip Tobin gets a haircut fom Phong, an Isaan convert who wants to show his changed life.

Mission workers face the challenges of contextualizing the gospel in Thailand.

Haircut evangelis

by Melanie Zuercher

When does contextualizing the gospel cross the line to syncretism—blending aspects of different religions in inappropriate ways? That's one of the challenges facing mission workers sent to minister to "unreached peoples," such as those in Thailand, says Sheldon Sawatzky, East Asia program administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church.

COM workers Pat and Rad Houmphan serve in Det Udom, northeastern Thailand, near the border with Laos. They are seconded to Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) of Salunga, Pa. They work with the Isaan (Lao-Thai) people. With a population of 21 million, the Isaan comprise one-third of the population and the second-largest ethnic group in Thailand. The majority follows Buddhism mixed with Hinduism and ancient animism.

The goal is to have a Spirit-empowered, contextualized Christian community that is self-sustaining and self-reproducing without funding from outside, firmly rooted in local soil and not associated with Western forms of Christianity.—*Sheldon Sawatzky*

The vision of the ministry, begun by EMM workers, is for "indigenous, contextualized church planting," says Sheldon, who visited Thailand last November. This means forming village-based communities of believers among the Isaan people, training leaders and giving the churches full responsibility for their continuing growth and development.

"The goal is to have a Spirit-empowered, contextualized Christian community that is self-sustaining and self-reproducing without funding from outside, firmly rooted in local soil and not associated with Western forms of Christianity," Sheldon says. "This method has been discussed for many years in missiological circles, and it is exciting to see this experiment unfold in actuality."

Some of the tangible forms of contextualizing Christianity in northeastern Thailand include meeting in homes for worship; sitting on the floor; separating women and men; using sticky rice and jackfruit juice for the Communion elements; using Isaan music, songs and instruments; praying with hands together; use of "satu" for "amen"; and self-baptism (i.e., baptismal candidates go under water by themselves instead of being assisted, because in Isaan culture people do not touch in public).

"There is some debate over how far contextualization should go before it gets into syncretism," Sheldon says. "What's important is that people choose to adopt forms and customs that they can fill or reinterpret with Christian meaning.

"There is precedent for this. For example, in Christian history, in our Christmas and Easter traditions, we've adopted so-called pagan practices and given them new meaning. The most common question in mission work is what word to use for God. Practically every culture has one or several terms for deity. Look at the Old Testament—there is 'El,' a Canaanite word for deity. The Hebrews had to name or distinguish who their God was: the one Lord, Jehovah, Creator of heaven and earth."

Contextualization is "a process, not done immediately," says Sheldon. "There's a thin line between remaining authentically Christian and syncretism."

The Houmphans began their work in Thailand in September 1996, joining two other EMM couples who had the initial vision for contextualized church planting among the Isaan. There has been some difference of opinion about the extent to which indigenous cultural forms and practices should be adopted and what methods should be used in church planting.

COM file photo

Contextualization: A group of Isaan musicians share their style of music.

The mission workers spend much of their time in friendship evangelism and discipleship training through a life enrichment course, as well as leadership training to reduce dependence on the missionaries.

For example, should the mission give money where there is profound need in order to show Christian care? Currently seed money is distributed for local, self-sustaining, income-producing projects such as a weaving industry or a fish farm.

Pat has expressed uneasiness with "tying the string," a Hindu tradition, to indicate blessing, and has introduced using water for blessing, says Sheldon. The mission team members honor each other's preferences in regard to some worship practices.

Despite the challenges of contextualization, Sheldon reports there is much reason for rejoicing in the work in Thailand. He attended a worship service in which the three groups of Christians with whom the Houmphans work met together. There are seven village groups and a total of about 100 Christians with whom Mennonite workers serve.

"There were around 30 adults," Sheldon says of the service in which he participated. "We sat on mats on the concrete floor. The service lasted a little over two hours. There was much singing, all of it in the Isaan style with a variety of local instruments and drums. Pat and son Philip played guitars and daughter Rachel a drum.

"There was sharing, observance of the Lord's Supper, using the local elements of sticky rice and fruit juice. Phong, who led the service, is the man with whom the Houmphans began the group after they arrived two years ago. Phong was formerly a bad character but completely changed by Christ. He goes out to give people free haircuts to demonstrate his change. The church bought him the equipment for doing this. He sees it as a ministry and means of evangelism."

The mission workers spend much of their time in friendship evangelism and discipleship training through a life enrichment course, as well as leadership training to reduce dependence on the missionaries. "There are several redemptive analogies in Isaan culture and in Buddhism itself that serve as a bridge for the gospel," Sheldon says. "Many Isaan people are responding to the message. This is a time of harvest among them."

Melanie Zuercher is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

COM file photo

Friendship: Rad (right) and Pat (second from right) Houmphan eat traditional food in Thailand.

Mission workers in Botswana face daunting challenges from the growing AIDs crisis.

Powerless against the multitude

by Melanie Zuercher

When Eugene Thieszen talks about his work in Botswana these days, he quotes from 2 Chronicles 20:12, where King Jehoshaphat of Judah is facing a vast array of enemies, and he prays to God, "We are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us."

In Botswana—and all of sub-Saharan Africa—the "multitude" is HIV and AIDS (see box on page 7). "I think I can speak for all of us [on the Mennonite Ministries team]," says Eugene, "when I say that all our training, good as it was, didn't prepare us for what we face now. We are learning how to minister in this crisis as we confront it."

Eugene is on a four-month North America Assignment, after which he will begin a year's leave of absence from his work with Mennonite Ministries, a cooperative effort of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Botswana. Eugene, appointed by the Commission on Overseas Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and AIMM, does Bible teaching and pastoral ministry with African Independent Church (AIC) groups in and around Maun, Botswana.

The Henderson, Neb., native has been in Botswana since 1984. He started as a pilot with the Flying Medical Mission (seconded from MCC) and in 1992 became the first AIMM missionary to be stationed at Maun.

In the last three years, I have lost 12 acquaintances to what appears to be AIDS—only one or two were actually tested.—*Eugene Thieszen*

"The death rate [from HIV/AIDS or what appears to be that] has been climbing since 1990, but it has really picked up in the last two years," says Eugene. "In Maun, a village of about 25,000, it's gone from two or three funerals a weekend [the traditional time for a Setswana funeral]—normal for a town that size—to so many on a weekend you can't count them, so many that they've had to move some of the funerals to weekdays.

"In the last three years, I have lost 12 acquaintances to what appears to be AIDS—only one or two were actually tested," he says. "In my circle of friends, another eight are sick."

The root reason AIDS has reached epidemic proportions in southern Africa, Eugene says, is "sexual promiscuity—marital unfaithfulness, premarital promiscuity. In the churches I work with, I've seen cases where a young woman, in her late 20s or early 30s, dies of what appears to be AIDS. To all appearances she has been faithful to her husband, but he has not been faithful."

AIDS in southern Africa is "a family disease," says Eugene. More women than men are infected, and the percentage of HIV-infected babies is climbing, as infected mothers pass the disease on to their babies before birth or during breast-feeding.

Botswana, relatively well-off as a result of its diamond mines, has conducted an educational campaign aimed at preventing AIDS. It has been well-organized and thorough—but nonetheless largely ineffective.

"There is a widespread belief that AIDS doesn't exist," Eugene says, "or it's put in the category of 'traditional' illnesses that have other causes. For example, 'boswagadi'—when a widow or widower does not respect the mourning traditions and begins sexual relations too soon after the death of a spouse, they get a disease with symptoms that are like AIDS. So they go to a 'traditional' doctor for a cure.

"There is a young man in one of the churches I work with who symptomatically appears to have AIDS—he hasn't been tested. His parents have gone to various traditional doctors and spiritual healers searching for a cure. Spiritual healers are [African Independent] church members who do an examination or divination using a Bible. The sick person holds onto the closed Bible, the healer prays and then asks them to open the Bible, and based on where it opens, diagnoses the disease and prescribes the cure. In this particular case, the latest diagnosis was that the young man had ridden in a stolen vehicle that had been protected by traditional medicine against theft."

Eugene has tried to address the issue of

Mission worker Eugene Thieszen (left) and senior pastor Pusoetsile of the Revelation Blessed Peace Church

AIDS in his teaching among AIC groups. "One of our courses deals with AIDS from a Christian perspective," he says. "The discussion focuses on what AIDS is and how it is transmitted. We consider questions like, Is it sorcery? A curse from the ancestors? God's judgment? And we come to the conclusion that it's none of those things, drawing on principles of Scripture to underline that, as well as to emphasize sexual abstinence before marriage and marital faithfulness. That's different from many other [non-Christian and government] programs that encourage use of condoms."

But the AIDS epidemic has affected Eugene's work well beyond adding a lesson to the Bible teaching curriculum. For one thing, it has affected when, or even whether, the teaching happens at all.

"It's getting more and more difficult to get Bible classes to meet, because of all the funerals," says Eugene. "In Setswana tradition, every evening until the funeral, there are prayers in the family yard. The evening has been the time when classes are taught. And I've been trying to organize some weekend Bible teaching seminars, but it hasn't been workable because of all the funerals. And when we can schedule classes, often people are exhausted."

Also there has been the emotional toll taken by the death of so many friends, combined with the necessity of spending so much time ministering to people—praying with the sick, being present at and sometimes helping conduct funerals, caring for orphans. Eugene is helping to support financially a 14-year-old orphan boy whose older siblings died of what appeared to be AIDS.

Eugene didn't know, when he started his second AIMM term in Botswana in 1996, that he would be planning, in 1999, to take a 12-month leave in which he hopes to do course work on and gain practical experience in pastoral care for the terminally ill and grieving.

"I need resources on how to minister in the midst of a crisis like this and survive, spiritually and emotionally," he says. "Right now, I'm feeling at a loss to know how to respond to this situation.

"I'm feeling—are you allowed to say this about church workers?—emotional and spiritual exhaustion. Ministry [in Botswana] is challenging, to say the least, and at times very heavy and difficult."

The Mennonite Ministries team has been trying to address this with workers, he says, by striving to maintain more contact with each other, by phone and email. "Every time we get together, whether it's for a meeting or a retreat, we make sure we take significant time to pray for each other."

It's also important, he says, especially for those like him who are "far-flung from each other, to find spiritual support and accountability where we live. That means not feeling guilty about attending English-speaking Bible study or prayer groups or church services to not cut ourselves off from other Christian colleagues.

"It's important to have some common cultural ground. It can be difficult to find support for needs closer to your heart across cultural lines—sometimes you don't even know the words to use."

There is an English-speaking church in Maun that Eugene can attend. He also has a prayer partner relationship with a Churches of Christ missionary family.

During his four-month North America Assignment, which is largely devoted to itineration, Eugene plans to tell about the joys of working in Botswana, along with the challenges. His theme, he says, comes from 2 Chronicles 20, Jehoshaphat's prayer.

Church workers in AIDS-stricken southern Africa have realized, like Jehoshaphat, that "our human resources, to a great extent, are at an end," Eugene says. But he points out that there is more to Jehoshaphat's story: In the same verse in which the king cries out to God about the array of enemies, he says immediately thereafter, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." And God delivers the people from the enemy.

I've been trying to organize some weekend Bible teaching seminars, but it hasn't been workable because of all the funerals. And when we can schedule classes, often people are exhausted.

—Eugene Thieszen

Melanie Zuercher is news service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

United Nations and World Health Organization estimates on HIV/AIDS in southern Africa:

- While only one-tenth of the world's population lives in sub-Saharan Africa, seven out of 10 people newly infected with HIV in 1998 lived there; among children, the proportion was nine out of 10.
- In Botswana, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, more than one person in five between the ages of 15 and 49 are living with HIV or AIDS.
- In 1998, there were 5,500 funerals a day in Africa for people dying of AIDS, more than 2 million for the year.

North American agencies step up responses to flood of Kosovar refugees into Albania

As the Balkans refugee crisis continues to intensify, North American Mennonite agencies are swinging into action to provide assistance to some of the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars who have fled to neighboring Albania.

Personnel with the Albania Mennonite Missions Foundation (AMMF), a partnership of Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM), have been released from their church-planting and development work to respond to the exodus of refugees. Two Mennonite Central Committee workers were scheduled to go to the country on April 8 to assess possibilities for further MCC assistance. MCC has already sent several hundred thousand dollars of material aid to Albania. VMBM and MCC are each accepting contributions for refugee assistance.

"We feel honored to be here for such an hour as this," says VMBM worker Tom Yoder in Tirana, Albania's capital. "It's time for the church to rise and serve."

The Albanian people are also offering their assistance, but their country is the poorest in Europe. "Albanians have nothing to spare," says Melike Smeenge, an EMM worker in Lushnje, Albania. "No bank account, no money—hand-to-mouth at best.

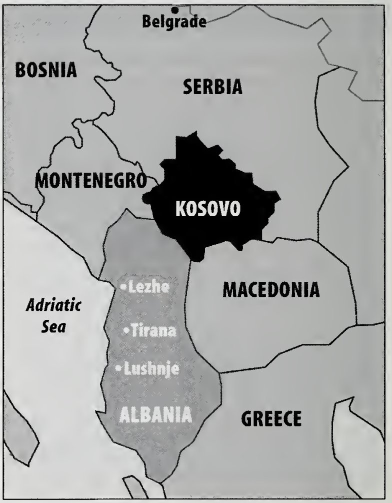
"Our hearts ache. We begin each day with prayer, then go to work."

Kosovars who are ethnic Albanians have been pouring into Albania from Kosovo at the rate of 4,000 an hour since NATO began bombing the Balkans before Easter. At least 6,000 refugees have arrived in Lushnje, where MCC has committed as much as $10,000 to assist the Kosovars.

"We have been pooling our own resources and have bought mattresses, blankets, simple groceries and diapers, and have collected used clothing and shoes," Smeenge says.

Five families and three single workers are serving with AMMF in Albania. A six-member EMM Youth Evangelism Service team has been sent on a two-week hiatus in Italy while administrators determine their next steps.

In Tirana, Yoder is serving with an alliance of 25 churches in the city who have taken responsibility for the government relief center. Refugees are being aided in a sports complex as they make their way to other areas. "We served bread, cheese, tomatoes, apples and salami as fast as we could," Yoder says.



He recently began focusing efforts on a tent city set up to temporarily house 2,000 refugees.

In Lezhe, EMM workers June and Paul Kropf report that some 3,000 refugees have arrived. The Kropfs, in conjunction with Catholic Relief Services, are making a distribution plan for recently arrived MCC canned meat.

While massive international assistance is being mobilized, MCC's assessment team of Dan and Evanna Hess will be searching for ways to help those who might have been missed. The Hesses had recently arrived in Belgrade, Serbia, from an assignment in Russia but had been away securing visas during NATO's attacks on the city.

MCC has already sent food, bedding, clothing, soap, and health, sewing and refugee kits, with more relief aid planned. The shipments have depleted MCC's supply of refugee kits.

MCC has two workers in Croatia and three in Bosnia. Although a change in assignments had been in the works for Bosnia workers John and Karin Kaufman Wall, their move was hastened by hostilities in the region. They have relocated from Banja Luka, which has a large Serbian population, to Sarajevo.—*EMM, VMBM and MCC news services*

CMC letter opposes Balkans bombing

In a letter to Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy, Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) officials have called for nonviolent approaches to the conflict in the Balkans.

"We urge Canada to cease its participation in the bombing of Yugoslavia, to influence NATO allies to cease as well and to seek actively alternative forms of violence reduction," states the letter, signed by CMC general secretary Helmut Harder, Resources Commission executive secretary Robert Suderman and Peace and Justice Ministries director Jeremy Bergen.

The letter noted nonviolent strategies used by Kosovars against Serbian oppression and suggested that the United Nations might be the place to try to resolve the situation.

"Ultimately," the letter's writers say, "we believe that violence breeds only further violence, and that is not the way to a true peace."

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Focus

Calling the bivocational pastor– Can you hear me?

Anne Stuckey

Every congregation should have one in the pulpit and one in the pew. One what? One person who is called to pastor the congregation and one person called and receiving training for future ministry.

I believe that God has called ministerial leadership for each congregation of believers who gather in his name. God has consistently provided such people throughout history and will do so in the future. We reflect this belief in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective when we say, "We also believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices." (Article 15)

It doesn't matter what the size, all congregations deserve and need pastoral care and leadership. Paul seemed to think this to be true for he was not willing to leave new congregations without pastoral leadership when he was ready to move on. According to Acts 14:23, he wouldn't leave Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch until they had appointed elders for each church. And I doubt if each of those congregations were capable of financially supporting a person in full-time pastoral ministry.

Later on in the same Article of the Confession of Faith we add, "The church calls, trains, and appoints gifted men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf." So if we believe that calling is a two-part invention by both God and the church, then we need to ask about our own involvement and responsibility. If God is doing his part calling people into ministry, then why do 42 percent of the current congregational openings in the United States and 27 percent in Canada continue to be the most difficult positions to fill because they are for part-time positions? We need to ask whether we in the church are doing our part?

It is rarely feasible to expect a person to move home and family long distances to serve a congregation that is asking for a pastor willing to give 15 hours per week. However, it is possible to think in terms of every congregation calling and growing local people for ministerial leadership. And if congregations in tandem with God call people into ministry, then the on-site training of these men and women can be a reality. The next generation of innovative ministry leaders will receive training in the context of their ministry placement. (George W. Bullard Jr., "Emerging Trends Impacting Congregations" *Net Results—New Ideas in Church Vitality*, January 1999). The seminaries and pastoral training programs in the church are working diligently to make education accessible to all pastors everywhere, though on-line courses, distance education, conference-based theological education offerings and other flexible programs.

Current bivocational pastors are interacting with the unchurched community in ways that few full-time pastors are able. We need bivocational pastors for the varied gifts and flexibility that they bring to their calling. So what is your congregation doing to call pastoral leaders for ministry in your setting? As I began, it is the responsibility of every congregation to have one in the pulpit and one in the pew in training! God is calling, are we?

Anne Stuckey is Minister of Congregational Leadership at Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, and Preaching Minister at Salem Mennonite Church, Waldron, Mich.

Inside

A bivocational pastor: Doing the things he enjoys

AMBS begins programs for bivocational pastors

A bivocational pastor:

Doing the things he enjoys

Randy Nafziger is not a bivocational pastor... not a trivocational pastor...but a—well, what do you call a pastor with four jobs?

He has been pastor of Tedrow Mennonite Church near Wauseon, Ohio, for nineteen years. It's a three-quarter-time assignment and it's been that way from the beginning, give or take small fraction. He also drives school bus, farms, and serves as a chaplain for Hospice.

People often ask him, "Why?"

His answer is simple: "I enjoy them all. I enjoy the variety and it keeps me in touch with people. I think I can be a better minister or pastor than if I did just one job. That's just who I am."

Being a pastor is Randy's primary calling. He is clear about that with the congregation and with himself. But he believes each of his roles contributes to the others. Driving school bus for the area around the church puts Randy in touch with the youth in the community. His work with Hospice gives him an opportunity to relate to people who do not have faith, and one man is becoming involved in the congregation because of Randy's contact with him in Hospice.

Randy, his wife and his brother work together to manage the family farm. This arrangement began four years ago when Randy's father and oldest son died in an automobile accident. "I enjoy working on the farm. The congregation has enough farm background to understand how that is a way to communicate with God."

Working with Hospice is a more recent addition to Randy's roles. Because of the death of his father and son, and the experiences of his mother and mother-in-law dying of cancer, Randy says he feels prepared to share with other people as they experience grief. "I see working with Hospice as a calling as much as I do the pastorate," he says.

Because of his other assignments Randy cannot easily take a longer sabbatical from the congregation, so he has chosen to take shorter service trips. At the time Randy was interviewed for this article, he was anticipating a two-week trip to Guatemala. He and others from his area, including several from the congregation, will be doing work for SEMILLA, the Latin American seminary in Guatemala.

"My congregation has been understanding and given me flexibility," Randy says. In fact, he says this more than once as he talks about his roles. It's clear how important this understanding and flexibility are to the relationship between the congregation and a multivocational pastor.

Randy admits he wonders sometimes if he's shortchanging something else in his life. He's stressed out at times, he admits, but recognizes that it's his choice to be involved in so many things. Time to read, he says, is the one thing he longs for most.

Randy says he often tells people, "It's almost unfair that I get to do so many things that I enjoy."

"It's almost unfair that I get to do so many things that I enjoy."

Randy Nafziger
Pastor, Tedrow Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio

Randy Nafziger attended Pastors' Week, January 15-18, 1999. It's an opportunity for him and other pastors to renew friendships as well as to gather new insights and find refreshment.

AMBS begins programs for bivocational pastors

Responding to the need for bivocational pastors in Mennonite congregations, AMBS will begin a new venture in its Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and Master of Arts in Peace Studies (MAPS) programs this fall.

With the new venture, students will be able to earn both an M.Div. degree and a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree in four years, or a MAPS and an MSW degree in three years. This will be possible through dual-degree programs offered by AMBS and Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich.

By earning two degrees, students will be able to prepare for multiple vocations, such as pastoring and counseling, or peace and justice work along with social work. These combinations open broader possibilities for employment for graduates, allowing them to serve congregations on a part-time basis and complement that ministry with other work.

AMBS selected Andrews University for these dual-degree programs because it is a Christian institution with values that mesh with those of AMBS. The Christian perspective permeates the MSW courses and a commitment to service, peacemaking and justice complement the emphases at AMBS.

M.Div. plus MSW

A student who pursues both the M.Div. and the MSW degrees would normally study five years; the joint program allows the student to complete this work in four. AMBS and Andrews University have worked out a plan where the electives of one program can be the required courses of the other.

With the two degrees, graduates will have strong preparation for ministry in congregations and also will have a psychological, social, clinical base of training for social work and counseling. This offers the church one solution to the need for pastors who are bivocationally prepared.

MAPS plus MSW

A student who pursues both the MAPS and MSW degrees will find a wider range of employment possibilities than either degree alone can offer. The combination also strengthens the theological and ethical foundation of social work study. So through allowing electives in one program to be filled by required courses in the other, students can get the benefits of both degrees in less time than it normally would take to complete two programs.

Scholarship fund

AMBS recently established a scholarship fund for bivocational pastors. This was possible through generous gifts from the family of James A. Steiner, a pastor and teacher in Missouri, Pennsylvania and Ohio. The scholarship funds are available to students who have been in or who are preparing for bivocational ministry.

For more information about the combined degree programs or the James A. Steiner Memorial Scholarship for Bivocational Pastors, contact the AMBS Admissions Office, admissions@ambs.edu.

We anticipate receiving formal approval of these programs from the Association of Theological Schools and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools by summer 1999.

Allen Yoder Jr. and Marie Yoder of Middlebury, Ind., were honored recently for their longtime support of AMBS. When the AMBS board of directors met at the seminary, February 12-13, 1999, Al and Marie were given a gift at a special meal in their honor. They have been friends and supporters of AMBS for many years and were central to the success of the Partners for Ministry comprehensive campaign. Al shared with board members his vision that the seminary's tasks are to prepare pastors to know the Scriptures and to be able to convert the Bible's teachings into everyday life.

Al Yoder retired as president of Jayco in 1993 and he and Marie continue other business interests as well as church involvements.

Photo by Mary E. Klassen

President's Window

Paul the apostle was a bivocational minister. Like most Pharisees, he had been trained both in the Law of Moses and in a practical business trade. Paul was a leatherworker who declared near the end of his life, "I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions" (Acts 20:34).

In my own lifetime, I've seen many Mennonite churches go from unpaid ministers to full-time salaried pastors. Even self-supporting Paul endorsed the salaried-minister plan (1 Cor. 9:14). But Paul chose to continue his leatherworking trade, which gave him the following benefits:

1. Being financially independent, Paul was not beholden to anyone. There was no chance he would modify his preaching to safeguard his salary.
2. Paul used the marketplace and business world as place for mission. He typically preached in a local synagogue when he arrived in a new city, but also worked and witnessed in the marketplace (Acts 18:1-4).

Paul was conversant in business matters, and there is evidence that many early believers were business people. Priscilla and Aquila were fellow leatherworkers. Lydia, the first believer from the continent of Europe whose name we know, was an international business woman (Acts 16:14). The earliest pagan account of Christian worship (by Pliny, A.D. 112), records that Christians gathered early in the morning for worship (before leaders and members of the congregation went off to daily jobs).

Today, the busyness and mobility of an increasingly professional and scattered church membership make it desirable for many Mennonite congregations to have pastors who can dedicate their best energies to fostering community and "equipping the saints." But a number of ministers, scholars and evangelists remain partly or entirely self-supporting—either by choice or by necessity. These multi-skilled people are a rich resource to the church, providing direct and sustained contact between church and "secular" settings.

Recognizing the value of bivocational ministry, AMBS will start a new program with Andrews University (a 45-minute drive from Elkhart). Over a three- or four-year course of study, students will be able to earn a graduate degree in theology from AMBS and a Masters in Social Work (MSW) from an accredited university. I think Paul the apostle would approve!

– J. Nelson Kraybill

Gospel of Mark

Study the Gospel of Mark with ***Willard Swartley,*** *AMBS dean and professor of New Testament, in four weekend intensive sessions this fall. For details about the course, the schedule, and the fees, call AMBS or contact registrar@ambs.edu.*

AMBS Panorama

AMBS student Dennis Fehr and Admissions Director Randall C. Miller performed a play about Peter painting Jesus' portrait at the March 7-8 Seminary Sampler Open House. Thirty people came to campus for the opportunity to explore seminary studies.

Preview:
January 2000 at AMBS

Interterm ***January 3-21, 2000***

Pauline Theology and Ethics — *Jacob Elias*
Congregational Spirituality — *Marlene Kropf, Marcus Smucker*
Christian Encounter with World Faiths — *Art McPhee*
Mennonite Church Polity — *Erick Sawatzky*
Family Systems and Pastoral Care — *To be arranged*
Nonviolence and Christian Faith in the 20th Century *Walter Sawatsky*
Peace and Justice—Latin American Perspectives *Mario Higueros*

Pastors' Week ***January 24-27, 2000***

"Bringing them in without selling out: Evangelism and Peace"

Leadership Clinics ***January 28, 2000***

To be announced

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Pages 2-4 - Mary E. Klassen

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Spring 1999

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Pastor numbers down, urban needs up

MBCM hears of merger woes and changing contexts

NEW YORK—While the number of openings for congregational ministry remains largely unchanged, the pool of candidates for pastorates is shrinking as pastors and would-be pastors are apparently opting to stay out of the turbulent waters of integration.

In March 1998, the list of candidates for General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church pastoral positions had 64 names—a number which had remained pretty constant, according to Anne Stuckey, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) staff member who administers the GC and MC pastor-placement process. But 12 months later, amid thorny integration-related issues, only 37 names were listed.

"Many candidates seem to be staying where they are rather than face great uncertainty because of integration and divisive issues in the church," Stuckey told the MBCM board during its March 19-21 meeting.

She said pastors have told her that rather than risk potential problems elsewhere that can rip apart memberships and exhaust their leaders, they are opting to remain where they know the conditions of their congregations. Other pastors are leaving the profession altogether.

According to Stuckey, the number of congregations with pastoral vacancies has been holding steady at about 10 percent of all GC and MC congregations—currently about 130.

The MBCM board meeting was hosted by Brooklyn's United Revival Mennonite Church, a 200-member congregation made up primarily of Central American immigrants. The setting provided an opportunity to examine the growth of congregations in urban contexts. The board spent one session hearing six area pastors and bishops describe the needs in their congregations.

One pressing need is more space, which is being acutely felt by at least four congregations. For example, United Revival packs 250 to 300 people into an auditorium designed for about 150.

Another issue is Spanish-language resources. Several pastors expressed appreciation for the Spanish-language version of the Jubilee children's curriculum but said the prices were too high. They also requested translations of information and promotional materials, such as *Tool Kit,* a Mennonite Mutual Aid information sheet.

In other business, the board

- Heard that more than 6,000 registrants have already reserved lodging for the St. Louis 99 youth convention, booking all available hotel rooms. Convention staff is exploring more accommodations.

MBCM photo by Everett Thomas

Nicolas Sandoval, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. (left), speaks to the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries board during its March 19-21 meeting. Listening are (left to right) Nicolas Angustia, pastor of United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, and MBCM staff members Marlene Kropf and Anne Stuckey.

- Approved a job description for a new youth minister, a joint position with the Commission on Education. The new appointment will replace MBCM youth minister Carlos Romero, who will step down in August, and add to current COE staff.
- Approved funding for a new Worship Reference Council, representing various worship styles—such as seeker sensitive, charismatic and traditional—to help MBCM provide resources to congregations.
- Approved participation in Second Mile, a new Mennonite congregational peace initiative being developed to start in 2001.—*MBCM News Service with Rich Preheim*

Corn symbol for Mexican Easter

X'OYEP, Mexico—To the list of Easter symbols of life, such as the cross, eggs and bunnies, add corn.

Four Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) workers in the embattled southern Mexican state of Chiapas on Easter Sunday, April 4, joined more than 50 members of Las Abejas, an indigenous Christian pacifist group, to plant corn on the grounds of a military installation. Corn is a Mayan symbol of life.

Members of Las Abejas, or the Bees, are among some 11,000 in a Chiapas camp who have been displaced by military and paramilitary activity during the past two years. The military installation was erected near the camp several years ago.

The Easter observance—which also included praying and singing—concluded a week of vigils. Starting on Palm Sunday, March 28, CPT and Las Abejas members had prayed and fasted daily at several sites around the military installation.—*CPT News Service*

Quilt project provides peace dreams

Indiana churches nurture children's peacemaking

Photo by Jim Kaufmann

While Emily Shantz examines one peace quilt (left), Asha Yoder Holsopple (center) and Kathryn Aschliman work on a second. Both quilts were created last summer as part of a joint Bible school of three Goshen, Ind., congregations: Assembly, College and Eighth Street.

GOSHEN, Ind.—A Bible school project last summer helped bring warm dreams of peace this winter.

Children from Assembly, College and Eighth Street Mennonite churches in Goshen have spent weeks sleeping under two Peace Dream Quilts created last June during the congregations' joint Bible school in June 1998. Each elementary student created a quilt block representing his or her view of peace. The blocks were then pieced and quilted.

During the fall and winter, each student was able to take one of the quilts home for a week, sleeping under it and recording their thoughts and dreams in a journal.

The quilt has had a variety of impacts on those who have slept under it, says Kathryn Aschliman, who initiated the project. A 6-year-old who had the quilt in September had a scary dream and realized he wasn't under the quilt. Sleeping under it the rest of the week, he had no more scary dreams. Another child who wasn't at Bible school slept under the quilt at a grandparent's house and dreamed of a land where Jesus was.

Aschliman, retired professor of early childhood education at Goshen College and member of College Mennonite Church, got the idea from a 1984 project, which put together a National Peace Quilt, made with one square from each state for each U.S. Senator to sleep under for one night.

"How do we help people to think about peacemaking and being ambassadors for peace in the home setting where it needs to happen?" says Aschliman, who has written a book on peace development in children. "I think [the quilt project] engages the whole family in thinking about what are our dreams for peace."

Ten-year-old Asha Yoder Holsopple, who attends Assembly, made a block with a picture of the world. When she saw the finished quilt, she noticed someone had made a mistake. "They put it upside down," Holsopple says.

She and her family spent many years in Africa. Her mother, Mary, thought the mistake was a blessing. "I think it's great," she says. "It's good for us to look at the world from the Southern Hemisphere."

The Holsopples agree that the quilt helps people think and dream of how they might be peacemakers. "The peace quilt is a visible reminder of all of us having a part," Mary says.

Adds her daughter, "If people see it and think it's a good idea, they'll say, 'We'll just give up fighting.' "—*Marshall V. King*

Speaker: Health-care witness needed now

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—In health care, Mennonites have historically emphasized holistic ministry to meet physical, social and spiritual needs. Now amid dizzying and unsettling changes in the field, Mennonites have been specifically called, health-care workers recently heard.

God's intention for wholeness in society is a "challenge only Mennonites are up to now," keynote speaker Gary Gunderson told the 47th annual Mennonite Health Assembly, held March 25-28 in Colorado Springs.

"Be as radical about health ministry as you are about peace," said Gunderson, director of the Interfaith Health Program at the Carter Center in Atlanta.

The assembly, sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Mutual Aid, drew 440 registrants working in various health-related positions. Participants included nurses, physicians, chaplains, pastors, mental health counselors, administrators and trustees of health and human-services organizations.

The assembly included worship services, 36 workshops and seminars, tours and an auction to raise money to help students attend. A choir of Denver-area Mennonite congregations provided Sunday-morning music, followed by a message from Vincent Harding, a professor at Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Mennonite Health Services presented the Trustee of the Year Award to Henry Rosenberger of Dock Woods Community, Lansdale, Pa., and the Organizational Award of Merit to Kings View Mental Health System, Reedley, Calif. Mennonite Mutual Aid presented J. Lawrence Burkholder with its Anabaptist Health Care Award.

Also recognized was Dean Preheim-Bartel for his seven years as assembly coordinator. He has resigned to move to Minneapolis.
—*John Bender*

> **Be as radical about health ministry as you are about peace.**
>
> —*Gary Gunderson*

No French connection: Montreal church planting to focus on being multiethnic and multicultural

NEWTON, Kan.—If success is determined by numbers, then 40 years of Mennonite church planting in Quebec have produced …

Not much.

Focusing on the province's French-speaking white population has resulted in only three French-speaking congregations in the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada. And none of them is in Montreal, the largest French-speaking city in North America, which has only an English-speaking MCEC congregation.

So with just four congregations in Quebec, MCEC has developed a vision for a multiethnic and multicultural congregation in Montreal. Quebec is more welcoming of immigrants than most of the rest of Canada, and Montreal has significant populations of Haitians, Congolese and French-speaking Hispanics, says Amzie Brubacher, MCEC interim mission minister.

The Commission on Home Ministries has named Montreal as its City on a Hill for 1999, awarding a $25,000 (U.S.) grant to support MCEC church-planting efforts. The City on a Hill project was started in 1994 to support Mennonite urban church work that models a holistic approach to the gospel.

"What [MCEC] has done in the past has not developed a strong, healthy French Mennonite church in Quebec, with people coming in from outside, having to learn French and overcome the political barriers," Brubacher says. "What has happened in the past was important foundation building, but now we need to work differently. We have to work with [leadership that is already] there. It looks like we're now going in the right direction."

Daniel Genest, a former Baptist and Mennonite Brethren pastor in Quebec, has worked in church planting with MCEC since 1994, first in northeastern Quebec, and for the past three years in Montreal.

"In the last six months, a number of things have come together," Genest says, "especially a prayer network of MCEC, the Abraham and Sarah [church planting and prayer support] program and Outreach Canada, the largest church planting network in Canada. We even have some Catholic nuns praying for us.

"It looks like this will be a multinational, multidenominational and multiethnic project."

Previous City on a Hill grants have gone to Dallas (1998), Vancouver (1997), Denver (1996), Toronto (1995) and Fresno, Calif. (1994).
—GCMC News Service

What has happened in the past was important foundation building, but now we need to work differently.

—Amzie Brubacher

Miami airport flies to top of Choice Books accounts

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Choice Books sold more books at Miami International Airport than anywhere else in the United States in 1998.

Last year, 31,497 books with a retail value of $193,503 were sold from the airport's 13 displays. A Miramar, Fla., Wal-Mart store, with two displays, sold the second highest number of books, 13,499 worth $86,367. The two topped Choice Books' airport and mass merchandiser account categories.

Other category leaders were: independent supermarket—Shady Maple Farm Market, East Earl, Pa., 1,068 books worth $9,577; chain supermarket—Publix, Atlanta, 4,200 books worth $26,124; general merchandiser—Lehman Hardware, Kidron, Ohio, 8,977 books worth $69,640; hospital gift shop—Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson, Miss., 4,096 books worth $28,353; travel center store—Flying J, Franklin, Ky., 2,035 books worth $11,953; restaurant—Das Essenhaus, Middlebury, Ind., 8,358 books worth $70,465.

Choice Books sales reached nearly 2.4 million books in 1998.

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Driver's seat

A boy in Swaziland's Malindza refugee camp plays with a homemade car made from wire. The camp's residents have come from Congo, which has been embroiled in civil unrest for the past several years. Every Thursday for the past two months, a group of 15 refugees has been meeting to discuss peace, justice and reconciliation, to culminate in a restorative justice and reconciliation worskhop in mid-April. Mennonite Central Committee workers Krista Rigalo and Fidele Lumeya are helping facilitate the activities. MCC workers previously led conflict transformation training and trauma workshops in the camp.

Keep citizenship door open for descendants of Canadian Mennonites, MCC urges government

OTTAWA—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada is asking the Canadian government to keep a door open for Mennonites from Latin America with claims to Canadian citizenship.

The government has proposed new citizenship legislation that restricts the eligibility of people born abroad of Canadian parents. Among them would be Kanadier Mennonites—descendants of conservative Mennonites who moved from Canada to Latin America in the 1920s, '40s and '60s. A number have become extremely poor, and many return to Canada in hopes of better economic possibilities. MCC Canada works with Kanadier Mennonites in both Latin America and Canada.

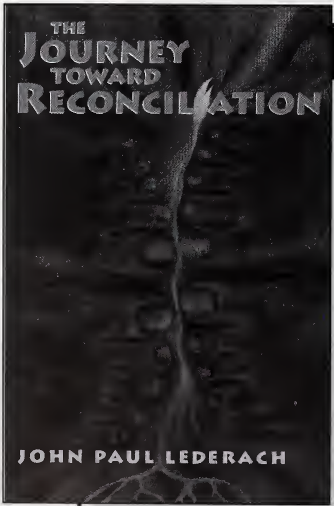
The vast majority of the 100,000 Kanadier Mennonites in Latin America are not eligible for Canadian citizenship, but some are under the current law, says Bill Janzen, director of MCC Canada's Ottawa office.

Proposed legislation would make ineligible for citizenship people born abroad of a Canadian parent before Feb. 15, 1977, and do not yet have citizenship and their subsequently born children. Missionary children would be similarly affected.

"It would close a door that has allowed the return of several hundred Kanadier Mennonites every year over the past two decades," says Janzen, who last month appeared before a parliamentary committee studying the bill.

"MCC is not asking that people be allowed to remain Canadian citizens indefinitely if they do not want to live in Canada," Janzen says. "But MCC would like to have the door kept open for those who come, often because of extreme hardship."

He also expressed concern about the proposed law's broader provisions to bar from citizenship people who might have come to Canada as refugees. Such refusals could be based not only on national security grounds but also on public interest grounds. Janzen notes, however, that such people would not thereby lose their permanent resident status in Canada.
—*MCC Canada News Service*



A Mediator's Journey

"From the outset, *The Journey Toward Reconciliation* by John Paul Lederach is punctuated by stories. From the first story in the book—which recounts the threats to kidnap his daughter because of his mediation work in Central America—to the last—which tells of Liberian peacemaker Samuel Doe who dreams of reconciliation for his country—the book lives and breathes the air of sincerity, struggle, and wisdom born of personal experience."
—*Christian Living*

"John Paul Lederach's vivid personal stories of peacemaking illustrate his deep insights into the preeminent challenge of our times: learning how to live together in the midst of deep differences. I highly recommend this book."
—*William L. Ury, Coauthor,* Getting to Yes

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Plan calls for new mission structure in 2002

DALLAS—Organizers hope to have a new mission structure in place for the integrated Mennonite Church in early 2002, according to a three-year "road map" for the current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church mission agencies. The plans were approved last month by the boards of Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). The Conference of Mennonites in Canada's Ministries Commission will also participate.

COM executive secretary Ron Flaming will direct the process, which is intended to produce a proposal for a new mission entity or entities for delegates of the new Mennonite Church in the summer of 2001.—*GCMC, MBM and CMC news services*

Anti-racism radio spots win award

HARRISONBURG, Va.—A series of nine anti-racism radio spots from Mennonite Board of Missions Mennonite Media has received a "Crystal Award of Excellence" from the 1998 Communicator Awards.

The spots, titled *Cappuccino and Ice Cubes*, address issues such as white privilege, racist policies and procedures in business and the workplace, immigration and standards of beauty. The spots are running on 314 stations from coast to coast, including Baltimore, St. Louis, Denver, Las Vegas and San Francisco.

The Communicator Awards recognizes outstanding work in the communications field. Thirteen percent of the 1,346 entries in 1998 received the "Award of Excellence," which is the highest honor given. Other recipients included Microsoft, General Electric, Atlanta Braves and *Wall Street Journal.—MBM News Service*

Insurance company makes charitable gifts

NEW HOLLAND, Pa.—Goodville Mutual Casualty Company made more than $40,000 in charitable contributions in 1998, including gifts to eight Mennonite and Brethren colleges and seminaries and seven Mennonite elementary and secondary schools.

The company's largest contribution went to Mennonite Central Committee for hurricane reconstruction in Honduras and earthquake reconstruction in Colombia. Other contributions went to Mennonite World Conference's Global History Project and local community services, such as fire companies and libraries.

by the way ...

Mennonite Central Committee last year distributed 607,297 pounds of canned meat in 12 countries.—*MCC 1998 Workbook*

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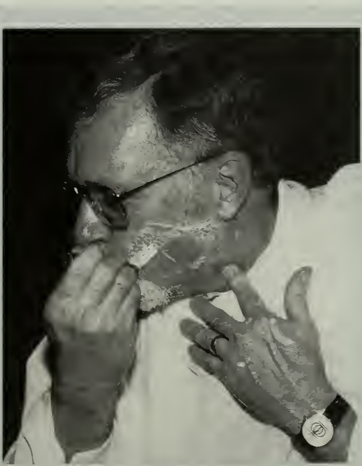

The Mennonite photo by Rich Preheim

Turning the other cheek

As General Conference Mennonite Church moderator, Darrell Fast has donated much time and effort to integration. On March 28 he donated his beard, which he had had for nearly three decades. Fast, pastor of Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., shaved it as a fund-raising contest for the congregation's junior high school group to go to the St. Louis 99 convention. Fast's shave netted $728.

Events

Michiana Anabaptist Historians breakfast meeting, April 10, Greencroft Senior Center, Goshen, Ind. Contact: 219-533-7819.

"Worship Evangelism" seminar, April 16-17, New Haven, Ind. Sponsored by Great Lakes Discipleship Center. Contact: 219-493-0808 or gldc1@juno.com.

The Giving Project Gathering, May 14-15, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore. Contact: GivingProject@Prodigy.net or 888-406-9773.

Workers

Beck, Bill, was ordained Jan. 31 as a pastor at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts, Ind.

Berry, Malinda, began Feb. 1 as associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service, Elkhart, Ind.

Birky, Chris, was ordained Jan. 31 as a pastor at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts, Ind.

Grove, Mary, was licensed Jan. 31 as a chaplain at Greencroft retirement community, Goshen, Ind.

Isaacs, James, on Jan. 31 concluded a pastorate at Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind.

Lanctot, Nina, on March 1 began a pastorate at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Ziegler, Dan, on April 2 became executive director of Spruce Lake Retreat, Canadensis, Pa.

Births

Bontrager, Carly Emma, March 24, to Greg and Nancy (Sauder) Bontrager, Wauseon, Ohio.

Chunn, Carly Alayne, Feb. 24, to Joseph and Leigh (Ediger) Chunn, Hutchinson, Kan.

Clemmer, Jeremiah Alan, Feb. 25, to Andrew and Pamela (Harnish) Clemmer, Hagerstown, Md.

Driver, Maxwell Woodward, March 20, to Regina (Stopher) and Woodrow Driver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Harrison, David Paul, Feb. 13, to Clayton and Rachel (Moyer) Harrison, Springs, Pa.

Hostetler, Austin Jay, March 26, to Julie (Roe) and Mike Hostetler, Shipshewana, Ind.

Nachtigal, Madelaine Paige, March 18, to Brad and Jodi (Claassen) Nachtigal, Lincoln, Neb.

Sugimoto, Allison Nicole, March 5, to Chelle (Friesen) and Scott Sugimoto, Reedley, Calif.

Wagner, Roman Vaughn, March 21, to Bradley and Natalie (Eckert) Wagner, Manheim, Pa.

Wiens-Evangelista, Max Andrew, Feb. 14, to Renee and Richard Wiens-Evangelista, Peabody, Kan.

Marriages

Brubaker/Collins: Melissa Brubaker, Mount Joy, Pa., and Brett Collins, Mount Joy, March 27 at Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hess/Miller: Shirlene Hess, Landisville, Pa., and Todd Miller, Manheim, Pa., March 20 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Miller/Suydam: Renee Miller, McVeytown, Pa., and Clayton Suydam, Allensville, Pa., March 13 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Stutzman/Troyer: Ryan Stutzman, Milford, Neb., and Tonya Troyer, Milford, March 20 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Deaths

Bachman, Correna, 85, Metamora, Ill., died March 21. Funeral: March 23 at Metamora.

Boose, Charles, 81, Lititz, Pa., died Feb. 28. Spouse: Mabel Boose. Parents: Harry and Bertha Boose (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice Shank, Lois Thomas, Jean Hunsecker, Bertha Sattazahn; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at Landis Valley Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Boshart, Florence Bast, 85, Lowville, N.Y., died March 19. Spouse: Clayton Boshart. Parents: Daniel and Mary Iutzi Bast (deceased). Other survivors: children Harold, Gerald, Clifford, Richard, Shirley Widrick; 17 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at First Mennonite of New Bremen, N.Y.

Coffman, David, 78, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 23. Spouse: Vivian Burkholder Coffman. Parents: Homer and Ella Swope Coffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Glenna Hertzler; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Harrisonburg, Va.

Dumm, Mary Hartzler, 94, Belleville, Pa., died March 7. Spouse: Harry Dumm (deceased). Parents: John and Fannie Hartzler (deceased). Funeral: March 10 at Belleville, Pa.

Frey, Marlin, 70, Chambersburg, Pa., died March 16 of a stroke. Spouse: Martha Frey. Parents: Abram Frey (deceased) and Margaret Lehman. Other survivors: children Gary, Karen Martin, Laura Lehman, Jay; nine grandchildren. Funeral: March 19 at Chambersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Frey, Robert, 51, Chambersburg, Pa., died Feb. 28 of cancer. Spouse: Dorothy Hilsher Frey. Parents: Adin and Janet Frey. Other survivors: children Kurtis, Clifford. Funeral: March 3 at Chambersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Glick, Charlotte Holsopple, 51, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 8 of cancer. Spouse: Del Glick. Parents: Carl (deceased) and Lydia Catherine Holsopple. Other survivor: daughter Renee. Funeral: Feb. 15 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

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A national conference, Church Music: Looking Back into the Future, for pastors, church musicians, academic musicians and laypersons interested in crafting a thoughtful future for music in the church will be held at Messiah College June 3–6, 1999. The conference is sponsored by the Louisville Institute, the Boyer Center, and in cooperation with the Calvin College Institute for Christian Worship. Scholars and practitioners will gather to discuss issues most vital to effective music ministry, using historical and current resources of the Christian tradition. Teams of church leaders and academic musicians who will work together following the conference are encouraged to attend.

Registration is $150 per person, including all meals. A discount of $50 per person is available to teams of three or more if registration is paid as a group. For conference materials and registration information, contact the Boyer Center or visit the web site at www.boyercenter.org.

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Gratz, Helen, 77, Bluffton, Ohio, died Feb. 7. Spouse: Justin Gratz. Parents: Paul and Gail Fisher Miller (deceased). Other survivors: David, Karyl Eckenwiler; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Bluffton.

Huether, Herbert, 76, Casa Grande, Ariz., died March 3 of cancer. Spouse: Delores Harvey Huether. Parents: Henry and Ottilia Kranzler Huether (deceased). Funeral: March 6 at Casa Grande.

King, Zella Mae, 83, West Liberty, Ohio, died March 20 of pneumonia. Spouse: Emmett King (deceased). Parents: Alfred and Katie Lapp Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Shirley; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 24 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Kliewer, Karl, 94, Newton, Kan., died March 14. Spouse: Clara Taves Kliewer (deceased). Parents: J. W. and Emma Ruth Kliewer (deceased). Survivors: children Susan Gallagher, Richard; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Kreider, Emma, 79, Lancaster, Pa., died March 24. Parents: Morris and Emma Herr Kreider (deceased). Graveside service: March 26 at Strasburg, Pa.

Liechty, Jason Wayne, 25, Fort Wayne, Ind., died March 18. Parents: Omer and Sherrie Liechty. Funeral: March 21 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind.

Lyndaker, Adah Lehman, 95, Lowville, N.Y., died March 13. Spouse: Reuben Lyndaker (deceased). Parents: Christian and Mary Zehr Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Elwood, Kermit, Warren, Lajune Lehman, Muriel Smoker, Ramona Zehr, Rhea Hunkins, Sharon Moser; 27 grandchildren; 44 great-grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren. Funeral: March 16 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, N.Y.

Mast, Les, 89, Sun City, Ariz., died Jan. 6. Spouse: Bess Mast (deceased). Parents: William and Sarah Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Stanley, Richard, Rod, Joan Shaffer, Lorene Phipps; 16 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 11 at Lundbergs Chapel, Glendale, Ariz.

Miller, Laverne, 72, Sarasota, Fla., died Jan. 18 of cancer. Spouse: Verna Miller. Other survivors: children Sherry Converse, Marjorie Pempsell, Gary, Ross; stepdaughter Sandra Reed; 12 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 21 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Morrison, Gladys Smucker, 91, Wadsworth, Ohio, died March 2 in an auto accident. Spouse: Leslie Morrison (deceased). Parents: Peter and Orpha Steiner Smucker (deceased). Survivors: children James, Carolyn Stoll, Rebecca Alonso; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 13.

Peachey, Nelda, 90, Allensville, Pa., died March 8. Spouse: Miriam Kauffman Peachey (deceased). Parents: Gideon and Sadie Spicher Peachey (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Margaret Yoder, Sara Yoder; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 11 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Pfile, Esther, 79, Goshen, Ind., died March 21. Funeral: March 23 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Raber, Noah, 80, Sarasota, Fla., died Feb. 20. Spouse: Elva Raber. Other survivors: children Nancy Galbicsek, Karen Erb; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 24 at Berlin Mennonite Church, Berlin, Ohio.

Schaefer, Sidney, 89, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 2. Spouse: Mary Keener Schaefer (deceased). Survivors: children John, Paul; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Schmidt, Agnes Hiebert, 84, Newton, Kan., died March 4. Spouse: Ted Schmidt. Parents: Jacob and Susie Goossen Hiebert (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice McAllister, Bobby; four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton.

Schrock, Beulah Christner, 98, Stryker, Ohio, died March 10. Spouse: Noah Schrock (deceased). Survivors: children Berneda Wyse, Shirley, Janice Prowant; 13 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; Funeral: March 12 at Pine Grove Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Shenk, Anna Mae Buckwalter, 91, Landisville, Pa., died March 4. Spouse: Phares Shenk (deceased). Parents: Amos and Annie Bowers Buckwalter (deceased). Survivors: children David, Robert; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 8 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Smucker, Icie Wenger, 93, Smithville, Ohio, died March 6. Spouse: Mervin Smucker (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Emma Gerig Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children John, Stanley, Ralph, David, Emma Stutzman; 16 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at Smithville Mennonite Church.

Stauffer, Meriel Stutzman, 91, Milford, Neb., died March 19. Spouse: Floyd Stauffer (deceased). Parents: Perry and Lena Stutzman (deceased). Survivors: children Morris, Thurlowe, Tim, Waunetta Stabenow, Shirley Utter; 21 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Milford, Neb.

Temple, Marie Ann Frey, 92, Emporia, Kan., died March 3. Spouse: Mac Loren Temple. Parents: Cornelius and Helena Schmidt Frey (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Slaymaker, Delores Deschner; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at Emporia, Kan.

Unruh, Allen Nelson, 73, North Newton, Kan., died March 19 of a heart attack. Spouse: Esther Peters Unruh. Parents: Harrison and Anna Schroeder Unruh (deceased). Other survivors: children Douglas, Yvonne Coulter, Charlotte Kreider, Suone Graber; seven grandchildren. Funeral: March 23 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Unruh, Kenneth Wayne, 45, North Newton, Kan., died March 19 of a seizure. Parents: Allen (deceased) and Esther Unruh. Other survivors: children Andrew, Katherine. Funeral: March 23 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Zook, Marian Kennel, 93, Atglen, Pa., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Leroy Zook (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Annie Mast Kennel (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Stoltzfus, Dorothy King; seven grandchlildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

classifieds

- **Community Mennonite Church**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks a full-time ***co-pastor***. Significant experience, a strong pastoral identity, gifts in worship and administration are desired. Women candidates will receive strong consideration. Contact Herm Weaver by May 9 at weaverhh@emu.edu or 1018 S. College Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4427.

- **Camp Hebron** seeks ***bookkeeper/administrative assistant***. Primary responsibility for camp financial services including accounts payable, accounts receivable and payroll. Experience with Quikbooks preferred. Must be detail oriented and able to work with a ministry team. Send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to Lanny Millette, Camp Hebron, 957 Camp Hebron Road, Halifax, PA 17032.

- **Upper Skippack Mennonite Church**, second oldest Mennonite church in America, cut back, pruned and ready to grow, needs experienced ***pastoral elder*** to join elder team. A heart for God and gift of leadership, strong preaching and teaching, vision to accomplish ministry through lay leadership, and compassion for the lost and broken.

  Send resume to Joel Hackman, 709 Mill Road, Telford, PA 18969; 215-256-6088.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***assistant principal.*** Full-time position requires leadership abilities in the areas of curriculum scheduling, daily school management and student relationships.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Glencroft Retirement Community** in Glendale, Ariz., seeks a ***licensed administrator*** to lead its 225-bed health care center. Candidates should have a successful track record in large facilities, excellent communication skills, ability to lead in a team setting, and an appreciation for the mission of a church-related, not-for-profit organization.

  Applicants should send their resume to Jenny Yoder, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church**, located in Abbotsford, B.C., welcomes applications for ***youth pastor***. Successful applicant should have a strong Christian belief and enjoy being with young people on a personal as well as group level. Closing date May 1, 1999.

  Applications and resumes may be sent to Search Committee, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, 2051 Windsor St., Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9; fax 604-850-8455; email eemc@rapidnet.net

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions in the 1999-2000 school year: ***guidance counselor*** (half-time position); ***athletic director***: one-year sabbatical leave fill-in position, responsible for the administration of a 14-sport athletic program; ***art teacher; mathematics teacher; physical education teacher***.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Bethel College Mennonite Church**, North Newton, Kan., seeks a ***lead pastor***. The successful candidate will have at least an M.Div. degree, preferably from a Mennonite seminary; strong commitment to Anabaptist-Mennonite faith and practice; excellent verbal and written communication skills; deep love for the church. Previous experience with multistaff pastorate is desirable.

  Direct inquiries and credentials to Marvin Zehr, conference minister, Western District Conference, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; 316-283-6300.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 300) invites applications for 1999-2000 teaching positions: ***English 12*** (40% position), ***German 9-12*** (60% position), and ***biology/environmental science 9-12*** (full-time, one-year term). Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueck-ak@hotmail.com

- **Tel Hai Retirement Community** is seeking an ***administrator*** for its residential living program. The position is responsible for oversight and coordination of all residential living activities including: successful implementation of marketing strategies, effective supervision of staff, management of physical facilities, coordination of services and operation within budget parameters. Successful candidate will be experienced in marketing/admissions, possess supervisor interpersonal abilities, and be familiar with issues of aging in a residential setting. Bachelor's degree in health administration, social services or related human services field is preferred. Tel Hai offers competitive wages and a great benefit package, which includes vacation, 401k retirement plan, education scholarship for employees and dependents, etc.

  Interested applicants should apply to Human Resource Department, Tel Hai Retirement Community, P.O. Box 190, Honey Brook, PA 19344; 610-273-9333. EOE M/F/V/D

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- **Mennonite Central Committee** is actively recruiting for a ***graphic designer*** in the communications department, Akron, Pa. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. Qualifications for this position include experience or training in graphic design required, willingness to work within corporate identity program required, working knowledge of MAC computers and Quark Xpress required (Macromedia Freehand and Adobe PhotoShop also preferred), study with fine arts emphasis preferred, knowledge of electronic prepress production helpful, and knowledge of MCC program and constituency helpful.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151, Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Department, or email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org. Applications will be reviewed starting May 15, 1999.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8th grade multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has classroom-teaching positions available. We are in search of classroom teachers for the ***kindergarten and 1st/2nd-grade*** classrooms. These are full-time voluntary service positions. Housing, health insurance, living expenses and personal stipend are provided. Applicants with teacher training and experience will be given preference. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 16, 1999.

  For more information or to request application materials, contact Marv Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Kraybill Mennonite School** is seeking applicants for the following faculty openings beginning 1990-2000 school year:

  Media center coordinator (librarian)
  Special education
  Grades 6-8 music and ***Bible teacher***
  Part-time curriculum coordinator

  Kraybill has 417 students enrolled in grades K-8. Contact John Weber, 717-653-5236, for an application, or send resume to 598 Kraybill Church Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is hiring a full-time ***director of development***. The position would officially begin in August 1999. Particular qualifications include good communication skills, a strong belief in Mennonite education, ability to work with a variety of people in schools, churches and the community. Experience in an education, church or business setting preferred. Bachelor's degree preferred but not required.

  Send a letter of application and vita to Crist Peachey, administrator, Manheim Christian Day School, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Harrisonburg Mennonite Church** seeks a half- to three-quarter-time ***youth pastor***. HMC is located three miles from EMU and EMS and the position would combine well with part-time studies at either of these institutions. We seek someone at ease with youth, who has administrative skills to help coordinate and equip the activities of MYF sponsors. Commitment to Christ and to Anabaptist teachings is essential. HMC is a growing congregation of 550 members served by a staff of five pastors.

  Submit your inquiries and resumes to Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, c/o Youth Pastor Search Committee, 1552 S. High St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801; web site http://members.aol.com/mailhmc/hmc.htm ; email mailHMC@aol.com

- **Bluffton College** seeks the following:

  Director, The Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center: 12-month, half-time director of the center for peace education through arts and literature for children. The center, which has received numerous awards, operates under the administrative auspices of Bluffton College. Qualifications include a commitment to peace education, creative vision and entrepreneurial/management skills. Master's degree preferred. Position opens July 1, 1999.

  Executive assistant to the president—Bluffton College: 12-month, mid-management position beginning July 1, 1999. Responsibilities include managing special projects and supervising select programs. Master's degree required.

  Applicants are welcome from qualified candidates who respect the Anabaptist-Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Consideration of applications begins immediately. A letter of application, resume and three letters of reference may be sent to the President's Office, Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH 45817. For additional information see www.bluffton.edu. EOE by Omar Eby

Heavens eternal, silent, terrible, beneficent

Day after day the skies pour forth speech.
—Psalm 19:2

The skies filled with eternal, radiant silence "pour forth speech." They who have ears for that language can hear it. Or rather, they who have eyes to read the changing faces of the heavens can discern them.

And what do I hear the skies speaking? Again, this marvelous paradox: God who is Spirit chooses also to manifest something of himself in the material. And what of this divine nature is proclaimed by the skies?

They are eternal, silent, beneficent and filled with a terrible beauty.

I cannot believe that God will destroy his own creation. Indeed, it is declared: In that day of the Lord, we who are yet alive will be caught up to dwell with him forever in the heavens.

I find the heavens silent, "silent as light," says the hymn. A silence that is filled with speech, paradoxically. Not a silence closed up, barred, sealed—well, not always, not often.

I look up to the heavens with thanks for their beneficence: rain violent and soft, sun a fiery liquid gold, mountains and prairies of clouds, mist like silk sacks, swift scud, shooting stars, a horned moon. One can see why the ancients sacrificed to the heavens, poured out libations to the sheltering sky.

I look up at the heavens in their clarity on spring mornings, blue, rain-rinsed; or at the approach of a thunderstorm, billowing, shredding—both are a terrible beauty. The first fills me with an inarticulate longing to live forever. The latter, to know God's purifying fury.

Day after day, night after night, O Lord, my speech pours forth to your heavens: eternal, silent, terrible, beneficent. Amen.

A timid declaration

I will declare your name to my brothers.
—Psalm 22:22

One Sunday the Ebys gathered in Hagerstown, Md., for the annual summer family reunion. I sat among brothers and brothers-in-law, sisters and sisters-in-law. But I did not declare God's name. All of us old men there teach Sunday school; two have been preachers. In our official capacities we can proclaim the Christ; in our homes at table, God is seldom uttered. And one of us talked on and on about real estate and smart deals and big money.

Two weeks earlier I went with several couples to hike on Massanutten Ridge. I have taught these people for 20 years in Sunday school. I have proudly, generously, assuredly proclaimed my faith, declared God at work in the world, railed against the politically hardhearted. Yet there on the mountain my lips were mute when one said "nigger," telling of a robbery. Nor, as we sat on rocks and looked out over the Shenandoah Valley to the Alleghenies in the west, did I declare aloud praise for the Creator of such beauty.

I have a third set of brothers—a few professional colleagues who are close to me. Together, gossiping in our offices, riding to conferences, I want to thank God aloud for this good fellowship of Christian friends. But an irrepressible wit comes up, and lively banter flies. Yes, yes, I console myself. This is important, remembering C.S. Lewis' *Four Loves*, with its salute to male camaraderie. But I do not—oh, rarely—declare God's name among these brothers.

I study the verse again and take some solace in the tense of the verb: "I will" in the future declare God's name. Is it a veiled threat? A contract between two solid personalities? A quiet promise of an intimate friend?

I will declare your name, O Lord, to my brothers—quietly, obliquely but sincerely—some time. Amen.

Omar Eby teaches at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

"I will" in the future declare God's name. Is it a veiled threat? A contract between two solid personalities? A quiet promise of an intimate friend?

Faith resources

The Grace Connection: Spiritual Power from the Lord's Prayer by James G.T. Fairfield (Herald Press, 1998, $10.99 U.S., $16.29 Cdn.) seeks to illuminate the mysterious intrigue we sense yet largely miss as we repeat the Lord's Prayer.

Sexually Exploited Children: Working to Protect and Heal, edited by Phyllis Kilbourn and Marjorie McDermid (MARC, 1998, $24.95 U.S.), is a practical manual to facilitate Christ's healing and love to broken children.

Temporary Shepherds by Roger S. Nicholson (Alban Institute, 1999, $17.95) is a handbook for congregations and interim ministers that examines pastoral transition.

Transforming Violence: Linking Local and Global Peacemaking, edited by Bob Herr and Judy Zimmerman Herr (Herald Press, 1998, $9.99 U.S., $14.25 Cdn.), reflects on peacemaking through stories of people and their work. Writers from Africa, Asia, Europe and North America draw on their traditions and experiences.

A Walk on the Wild Side: A Journey Through the Gospel of Mark by Dave Ens (Kindred, 1999, $6.95 U.S., $9.95 Cdn.) is a devotional for youth.

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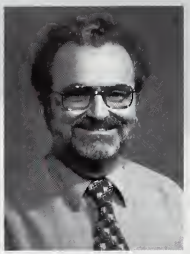

J. Lorne Peachey

A new vision for a new church in a new century:

'Whatever!'

"There seems to be a certain uneasiness and lack of focus in these closing decades of the 20th century ... [a] disquiet with our status quo in the Mennonite church."

These words from the promotional material for a conference on diversity and the church surely caught my attention. They also caught the attention of 140 others—from California to Manitoba to New Jersey—who gathered at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in southwestern Pennsylvania March 24-26 for a conference with the title "Pluralism and Community: Conversations on the Calling and Character of Anabaptist-Mennonites for Beginning the 21st Century."

The crowd for this event was made up of pastors, theologians, communicators and academicians. We came in response to an invitation from five retired Mennonite educators who planned and moderated the event: Myron Augsburger, Norman Kraus, Harold Lehman, Calvin Redekop and Ed Stoltzfus.

For two days we heard papers on topics such as "The Mennonite Situation at the End of the 20th Century," "Theological Issues Facing the Church," "Identity in an Era of Cultural Pluralism" and "The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society." We were also supposed to "re-image a common vision for the present pluralistic Mennonite reality."

The solution for our uneasiness, our need for vision and our longing for revival may be simply to pray once again with Jesus: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done."

Coming up with a common vision—that proved to be a most difficult task. In small group discussions, we spent our time defining pluralism and trying to decide if the fact that Mennonites differ on core beliefs and values is more good than bad.

About the closest this conversation came to a common vision for a new church going into a new century was a vigorous discussion on the need for Mennonites to be involved in ecumenical dialogue. But even here we were pluralistic. Some wanted to talk about dialogue with other religions, some with other Christian bodies and others with the global Mennonite community.

It was Tom Yoder Neufeld from the faculty of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., who put vision and our need for one into some perspective. We shouldn't assume that just because we feel we need a vision, God will give us one, Tom said. "Maybe one of the tasks we have at the end of the century is to be ready to receive a vision, rather than thinking we can get together and construct one."

Not that we don't need events like the Laurelville conversation, the Kansas City consultation on membership (see March 23 *The Mennonite*) or other gatherings to talk about the church. But we need to come to these with prayer and a spirit of receptivity, Tom said, "knowing that it is ultimately God who will supply the vision." God is also the one in control of the future of the church.

Tom's words are echoed by Annie Lamont in her latest book, *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith* (Pantheon, 1999). In writing on prayer, Annie tells of a friend who has reduced her morning prayers to one word: "Whatever!"

How appropriate for followers of Jesus Christ as we close one century and begin another. What a vision for a church in a confused and confusing world—just to be able to turn to God and say, "Your will. Whatever!"

That's not an easy stance. With confusion come restlessness and unease. Right away we want to get to work and fix what we don't like, to make certainty out of ambiguity. It's what the Western mind has been trained to do best.

But as 1999 moves toward 2000, we may need to learn another way. Perhaps the time has come to be still and listen—first to God, then to each other. Out of our listening will come nudgings from the Spirit, convictions to our hearts that will take us to places and have us do things we would never imagine on our own.

If Tom Yoder Neufeld and Annie Lamont are right, the solution for our uneasiness, our need for vision and our longing for revival may be simply to pray once again with Jesus: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done."

Amen, Lord Jesus. Whatever!—*jlp*

the Mennonite

April 20, 1999

civil disobedience
livine obedience

6 Faith at the center

8 "Step forward" in race relations

9 War by other means

16 The shame of being Christian

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Taxing thoughts

The April 6 issue on war taxes rekindled my thoughts of a decade and a half ago when I chaired the War Tax Committee for Indiana-Michigan Conference. My conclusions then after months of study still seem applicable today:

1. Should not such articles appear the first week of December of each year, calling us to increase our year-end charitable giving and so reduce our taxes as allowed by the tax code? This would not only greatly reduce our taxes but it would benefit the church and bless us.
2. Should we reduce our incomes, go out of business, etc.? No! People around the world need our help, and God has placed money and resources in our hands to help them.
3. Should we withhold a portion of our taxes? No! We can reduce our taxes to a minimum by giving to God what belongs to God. Let's not make tax collecting more expensive than it already is. But let us speak to our government officials calling for them to work for peace.
4. Should we reduce our taxes by giving to a Peace Tax Fund? No! Why give God's money to a worldly organization to spend when the present tax code allows us to reduce our taxable income by giving to God through his church that which belongs to him.
5. We who have stock, bonds and other material assets can give them directly to church organizations and institutions and so reduce our taxable income. Why not create scholarships at church schools to benefit and encourage our heirs to develop their talents rather than give them a handout to squander on the things of this world?—*John F. Murray, Kouts, Ind.*

The value of discipline

After reading the good letter by J.J. Hostetler (Readers Say, March 23), whom I admire greatly, I wanted to respond. When I volunteered for the Navy in World War II, our church in Iowa-Nebraska Conference automatically excommunicated me. I knew that the church stood against the military, and after two years I wanted to return to the church and share my Christian faith and encourage others to share their faith. While away, assurance of salvation became a question for me, and I was delighted to learn from my parents and others via letters that you could surely have assurance.

To me, excommunication meant that I was not following what the church stood for, and in retrospect it was a good thing. I think this kind of discipline has value in maintaining standards of faith based on Scripture. When we place Scripture on a nonauthoritative level and remove standards for Christian living, asking only "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" without asking for commitment to a holy lifestyle, we will soon have a greater increase in activities that surely are not pleasing in the sight of God. I am glad the church maintains standards of life as well as a call to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.—*Don D. Reber, Goshen, Ind.*

History's numbers

What "Mennonite Historian" gave you the tidbit of misinformation in By the Way in the March 23 issue? More than 35,000 Mennonites were not "resettled in Germany by the Nazis" during World War II. They fled from the Russians. Only about 15,000 ever reached western Germany. The rest were deported by the Russians back to Russia, and many—probably most—perished. There was an agreement between the Soviet government and other Allied governments to hand "Russian nationals" to the Russian troops so the latter could "repatriate" them (including relatives of mine). Quite a few returned to Germany later. These Mennonite refugees from Russia thought of themselves as Germans and had spoken German for generations. Many of the men volunteered for the German army to fight the advancing Russian army.—*Gunther H. Schmitt, San Bernardino, Calif.*

Editor's note: The information in the March 23 By the Way came from the September 1998 Mennonite Historian, *published by the Mennonite Heritage Centre and the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Winnipeg.*

A most remarkable woman

In the March 2 issue, Brent E. Koehn's article ("Inclusiveness and Challenge") referred to the Samaritan woman at the well as "one of the dregs of society." I am not certain whether he was stating his opinion or telling us about the ancient Jewish attitude. It is always risky to interpret conversation from paper and print. Nevertheless, I choose to make some comments about her, whom I consider to be a most remarkable woman.

The woman came to the well without children. I assume that she had none. Five men had married her and abandoned her. In those days, men took wives and men abandoned wives. Divorce was not a woman's privilege, and women were considered property. I again assume the reason men abandoned her was

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because she was unable to produce babies. It was quite likely she was sterile. If people have a need to emphasize and broadcast the sinfulness of others and also place the blame, the burden in this case would fall to the men, not the woman. Let us not forget that she had a wonderful relationship with her townspeople. In droves they followed her recommendation to check Jesus out and decide for themselves whether he was the Messiah.

We will probably never know the real and accurate story, but I think this perspective needs to be considered. In my opinion, this Samaritan is the most maligned woman of the New Testament.—*George Unger, Goshen, Ind.*

Whither discipleship?

The difficulties the Mennonite church is going through right now have troubled me deeply. The controversy that has arisen over lifestyle issues threatens to rip the very foundations of the Anabaptist faith right out from under us. I no longer attend a Mennonite church due to unrelated circumstances. But my heart is still with her, and I weep with sorrow over the manner of debate that is now occurring. God's truth impresses upon me that one of the most important beliefs of Anabaptism that seems to be missing is discipleship. Where has it gone in this great debate? It is not even in the conversation.

What kind of shape are we in now to face a time when the real themes of right and wrong and faithfulness to God really come to the fore? What about the plain and simple truth of discipleship and constancy of day-to-day walk and faith issues? Isn't there a call to each new generation to find an appropriate expression of those themes? To hold the line against encroachments of the world that would lead us down the wrong path?—*Tim Kaufman, Elsie, Mich.*

Cover photo by Ryan Beiler

Against the system

Civil disobedience and the biblical record

by Kathleen Kern

Several millennia ago, the ruler of Egypt told Hebrew midwives Shiphrah and Puah to kill all the male newborns of the Hebrew slaves in order to curb the increase in the Hebrews' population. The two women continued delivering the babies as they always had. When the Pharaoh asked why they hadn't followed his orders, they told him that Hebrew women deliver their children much faster than Egyptian women and that the babies had already arrived by the time they got there (see Exodus 1:15-2:10).

The Pharaoh then made infanticide the responsibility of all Egyptians, commanding them to drown Hebrew boys in the Nile River. But when the Pharaoh's own daughter found the baby Moses in a basket floating in the Nile, she disobeyed the order and adopted him, thus ensuring his survival.

After Jesus' death and resurrection, Peter and John were preaching in the Jerusalem temple. The priests and Sadducees told the temple guard to arrest the two of them. Since the religious authorities couldn't find a reason to hold them, they released the two men, stipulating that they were henceforth forbidden to talk about Jesus. Peter and John responded, "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). Peter and John returned to the community of believers and reported what happened. They did not pray for God to keep them safe from the people in power but asked God to give them courage to continue defying the establishment. Sure enough, a couple chapters later, they are again in jail, and once again they tell their oppressors, "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29).

Peter and John did not pray for God to keep them safe from the people in power but asked God to give them courage to continue defying the establishment.

Their disobedience inspired Gamaliel, a renowned teacher and member of the religious council, the Sanhedrin, to propose a far-sighted solution. If the apostles were just another example of loonies that crop up during turbulent times, they would ultimately destroy themselves. If, however, the apostles were doing God's work, the Sanhedrin wouldn't want to be caught on the wrong side.

In 16th-century Europe, the Anabaptists refused to baptize their infants although required to by law (baptism records were used to assess taxes). They refused to participate in state-sanctioned violence as soldiers or magistrates. They refused to swear the required oaths in court. They refused to obey the authorities and stop preaching the subversive good news of Jesus Christ, which stood in glaring opposition to the religious and political establishment of their time. For this resistance, many were burned, drowned or executed in other ways.

Civil disobedience: Shiphrah, Puah, Pharaoh's daughter, the apostles and the early Anabaptists committed civil disobedience, although they would not have used that term (made popular by Henry David Thoreau's essay "On Civil Disobedience"). They disobeyed the law of the land because those laws were morally wrong. Their spiritual heirs refused to take up arms against their fellow human beings in generations of wars that followed. They assisted people escaping from slavery. They sheltered Jews during the Third Reich. They participated in mass movements to topple totalitarian regimes. They refused to observe the strict segregation laws in the American South and in South Africa. This past November, more than 2,000 of them trespassed onto the Fort Benning military base to call attention to the School of the Americas headquartered there, which has trained some of the most notorious human-rights abusers in the Western Hemisphere. In fact, I cannot think of one successful nonviolent movement against a social evil in this century that did not incorporate civil disobedience as part of its campaign.

I have a friend who prefers the term divine obedience to civil disobedience because she thinks it puts a more positive spin on the actions taken for reasons of conscience. She has a point. Being pro-God is better than being anti-social, and the term is in keeping with the attitude of Peter and John in the Acts account.

But as I look at the scope of biblical and church history, I am struck by how much being faithful *is* an anti-social struggle against immoral societal norms and systems of domination. Biblical heroes called on people of faith to resist idolatry, to resist societal forces that marginalized the weak, to resist the notion that

only priests could enjoy communion with God. Early Anabaptist writings set people of faith against a world that imposed religious observance through fear, promoted state-sanctioned killing and elevated aristocrats over peasants.

Yet when modern authorities arrest people of conscience for damaging submarines that deploy nuclear weapons, or for trespassing on military facilities to call attention to the violence these bases promote, many Christians, including Anabaptists, view these acts of civil disobedience as disreputable, something "nice" people don't do.

Obey the authorities: The arguments Christians present against civil disobedience tend to revolve around Romans 13, in which Paul exhorts believers to obey the authorities because they have been given authority by God. Paul goes even further, saying Christians should obey the authorities not only because they fear the consequences of disobedience but also for reasons of "conscience."

John Knox, in his commentary on Romans, notes that Romans 13:1-7 "has an importance all out of proportion to its length because of the influence it has exerted." He speculates why Paul included it in his letter. Was it because of seditious tendencies or anti-government feeling among the Christians in Rome? Was he afraid he may have given them the wrong impression at one time when he criticized the government? Did he know that the Roman Empire's unification of the lands under its dominion made it possible for him and other missionaries to travel safely by land and sea to spread the gospel? Was it because Paul was grateful for the protection Roman magistrates had given him from mob violence (Acts 18:12-16, 21:35–23:35)? Was it because Paul recognized that the Roman Empire could be a source of persecution (see Romans 8:35-38) and wanted the church to remain on the good side of the authorities?

Knox believes the most likely explanation for Paul bringing up the matter has to do with a previous section in Romans 12 in which he counsels Christians against avenging themselves. Perhaps he intended to assure the church in Rome that the authorities had matters well in hand and Christians should let them punish troublemakers.

I suspect that when Christians use Romans 13:1-7 as an argument against civil disobedience, their desire to take Scripture seriously is mixed with other motives. People who commit civil disobedience often appear bizarre to the world. They disrupt the status quo that contains many benefits for good, law-abiding Christians. They alienate family and friends.

We need to take the writings of Paul seriously. We cannot embrace inspiring and healing passages from Romans such as "If God is for us, who is against us?" (8:31) and discard Romans 13:1-7. At the same time, however, Christians must not hold up Romans 13:1-7 as having more validity than the stories of Shiphrah, Puah, Peter and John. They, too, are a part of the biblical record.

Most of all, the church must pay attention to the example of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who healed on the Sabbath, fraternized with disreputable people and in general disrupted the Pax Romana by proclaiming that the laws of God and the message of the prophets superseded the laws of the religious establishment and the laws of the empire. Jesus committed civil disobedience when he entered the temple in the last week of his life and overturned the tables of the money changers and others who used religion to exploit the marginalized. In fact, Jesus committed the ultimate act of civil disobedience on Easter morning, when he defied the judicial death sentence imposed on him by the Roman authorities and rose from the dead.

I have never been arrested, although I have committed civil disobedience. I do not drive over the speed limit. I wear a seatbelt. I try to obey the laws of my country that promote the common good. But I have seen how systems of domination gain strength from people of goodwill who are afraid to make waves, who use the Bible as an excuse not to question the powers that exploit, torture and kill their fellow human beings. My prayer is that when I find myself facing these powers and principalities, the witness of Jesus, the apostles and my Anabaptist forbears will enable me and my fellow believers to echo their words: "We must obey God rather than any human authority."

Kathleen Kern lives in Webster, N.Y.

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The Bible teaches that being uncomfortable in the middle is a valid place to be in matters of faith and practice.

by Dave Rogalsky

Jesus was faced with a difficult situation. He was teaching in the temple when a group of Pharisees brought a woman to him who had been caught in the act of adultery (see John 8:2-11).

"Teacher," they said, "in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. What do you say?"

We often think of the Pharisees as Jesus' enemies. This is unfortunate. They were important teachers in the Jewish community. The Pharisees taught a strict obedience to the 613 laws of Moses. To keep from breaking even one of these laws, they designed many small laws, fencing in the main law. These smaller laws from oral tradition were considered by the Pharisees to be binding on all Jews.

Small wonder that they brought this woman to Jesus and demanded obedience to the law.

But Jesus was also faced with people at different points on the religious spectrum. The Sadducees were less likely to demand such strict observance. They rejected the oral tradition as compulsory. The Pharisees felt that the Sadducees compromised the true faith by working with the Romans and other world powers. The Sadducees were seen as leaning toward the grace end of the spectrum, going easy on mixing Jewishness with the world. They might have let the woman go on grounds of compassion.

Jesus was staking out new territory that upheld what he saw as God's will for human relationships, while practicing mercy and grace.

As is common wherever people try to be faithful, there were more extreme groups Jesus needed to consider. More demanding than the Pharisees were groups like the Essenes, who preached an imminent end to the world because of sin. Some of these groups formed communities in the desert to escape worldliness. John the Baptist might have belonged to one of these. These groups would have agreed to the stoning.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Herodians lived as Romans or Greeks with a Jewish flavor. They took part in the sports, politics and culture of the day. They might have wondered why the fuss about adultery.

Jesus is faced with all these groups. And in the midst of this, he is still charged with his central mission of declaring the nearness of God's kingdom. The Pharisees are trying to make it difficult for him—by responding he will put himself into one of the religious camps.

Perhaps Jesus was taking time to think and pray by first doodling in the dirt. Then he straightened up and said, "Any of you who is without sin may cast the first stone at this woman." The caster of the first stone was usually the witness who had identified the wrongdoing. By throwing the stone, he was taking responsibility for the sentence.

Some translators feel that Jesus' words should read, "Whoever has not committed this sin may cast the first stone." The Pharisees would have understood this to mean any sexual sin, not just adultery. Jesus refuses an absolute and literal interpretation of the law yet upholds the law as a guide for life and faith. He could be seen as leaning toward the Sadducees and Herodians.

As the accusers leave, Jesus says to the woman, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again" (John 8:11). Jesus is compassionate, gracious, yet clear that this woman had sinned. By telling her to stop sinning, Jesus was upholding the law. Sexual activity outside the guidelines set down in Scripture is wrong. He could be seen as leaning toward the Pharisees and the Essenes.

Not a tactical compromise: With this answer, Jesus stays out of any camp. Yet he has planted himself firmly in the middle of the religious controversies of his day. This is not simply a tactical compromise. Jesus was staking out new territory that upheld what he saw as God's will for human relationships while practicing mercy and grace.

Jesus' message was that in him God was again drawing near to humanity as the rightful ruler. He preached neither simple adherence to rules nor complete human freedom. Instead he modeled an intimate relationship with God and God's people.

The center, where Jesus positioned himself, includes, first, a relationship with God, and, second, an ongoing discussion, based in Scripture and Christian tradition, of what it means to live out that relationship in our human relationships. The center is living in God's kingdom.

The majority of Christians find themselves in the middle. Some are comfortable about this; others wonder whether the middle is

th
center

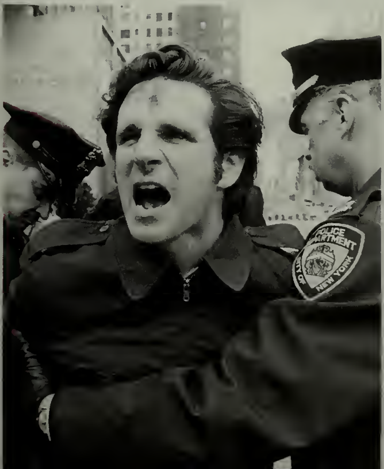
lukewarm. Haven't real Christians always said and done things that make them stand out from the rest of the herd?

The story of the woman caught in adultery—and other teachings in the Bible—tell us that being uncomfortable in the middle is a valid place to be in matters of faith and practice. To remain uncomfortable in the middle means that we are listening to the extremes. We remember that Jesus challenged all the positions of his time and that prophets have often spoken God's word from extremes to challenge the complacent.

The center needs the extremes to keep balanced. But the extremes of faith and action also require the center to keep from slipping off into heresy and sin.

This principle can be seen in the early church's debate about whether Gentiles need to become Jews to join the church. Luke tells us that Paul and Barnabas "had no little dissension" with Jewish Christians. Representatives of both sides went to Jerusalem to air the issue before the leaders there.

After a lengthy (and heated) discussion in which both groups told their stories, and Peter shared his experience with the Roman centurion Cornelius, a decision was handed down by the speaker, James, and the whole group agreed: "It seemed good to us and the Holy Spirit that we should lay no burdens on the Gentiles except that they should refrain from animals killed by strangling, meat offered to idols and sexual immorality" (Acts 15:28-29).



Ryan Beiler

There are several items of interest here. First, James was the most Jewish of the apostles and remained so. Second, the reason given for the conditions was to leave room for the continued fellowship of Jewish and Gentile Christians. Assumed in all this was a belief in Jesus as the Messiah.

Here again we see that the extreme positions were carefully considered. And while a compromise was found, not everyone abided by it. Some took liberties with meat offered to idols and some continued to argue for Gentiles to become Jews. But the principle of promoting fellowship between Jewish and Gentile believers continued to be an operating principle in the church.

Both "Judaizers" (those demanding full Jewishness) and "Nicolatians" (those promoting idol worship) were eventually excluded because they refused the balance offered by those in the center. In many ways they excluded themselves by not recognizing Christ at the center.

The early church practiced a central faith but listened to those with extreme positions. These were not excluded as long as they upheld the central belief in Jesus.

Need for connections: Again, this was not only a tactical compromise. On the question of Gentile inclusion, the early church looked to the Holy Spirit's inclusion of many peoples—see Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10) and Paul's ministry (Acts 13:44-49)—and to Jesus' prophecy of "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). They also held to the second principle of the need for connections between Christians and so asked the Gentiles to follow some rules to make this fellowship possible.

This position did not make everyone happy and, judging from the ongoing discussions in Paul's letters, did not make those in the center comfortable either. Since one of the principles is ongoing discussion within the Christian community, there may not be an end to some issues.

We have to be prepared to live with ambiguity, tension and ongoing struggle as we seek to follow Jesus' example in Christian community. Jesus was able to see his opponents as members of God's covenant. He worshiped, discussed and fellowshipped with them.

The early church was able to see those with various positions on the Gentiles as Christians seeking God's will. They also worshiped, discussed and fellowshipped together. This is the center, rooted in Christ, seeking God's will in community.

The center needs the extremes to keep balanced. But the extremes of faith and action also require the center to keep from slipping off into heresy and sin.

Dave Rogalsky is pastor of Poole Mennonite Church, Milverton, Ont. This article originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

Change of plans for new church's top board seen as 'step forward' for race relations

The goal was to make sure people of color had a voice at the top level of the new Mennonite Church U.S. But when disagreements arose over how best to do that, it became apparent that a new way had to be found.

Integration organizers had proposed inclusion: Twenty percent of the seats on the 20- or 21-member Executive Board would be held by people from the church's African-American, Asian, Native American and Hispanic membership as selected by the nominating committee.

That wasn't enough, said the racial/ethnic groups. Also needed was representation: people of color on the board to be the official presence of their respective groups, to speak for them.

So the U.S. Country Committee, charged with developing the integrated U.S. structure, has a new plan. While it doesn't affect the number of people of color on the Executive Board, it does change who appoints them. As a result, the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) racial/ethnic groups will have four representatives:

- One African-American, chosen by the MC African-American Mennonite Association (AAMA). There is no parallel GC organization.
- One Asian, chosen by GC officials. Most Asian groups in the United States are affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church but are not formally organized.
- One Native American, chosen by the GC Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (MILC) and MC United Native Ministries (UNM).
- One Hispanic, chosen by AMIGA, the GC Hispanic organization, and the MC Hispanic Mennonite Convention (HMC).

In lieu of equality: "As long as Native Americans and blacks and Spanish and Asians are not equal to whites in society, we'll need representatives appointed because we aren't equal in numbers," says UNM president Don Barnhill.

Furthermore, he says, "There was no way that I as a Native American could represent the Spanish."

All board members, including the four racial/ethnic representatives, are expected to be announced during the joint meeting of the GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada general boards April 22-24 in South Bend, Ind. A fifth person of color, Roy Williams, has already been selected by the nominating committee to the executive committee of the new board.

The plan for racial representation is part of the U.S. Country Committee's recommendations for the new church, to be approved by the general boards and delegates. According to the recommendations, the Executive Board will be a leadership board rather than a representative board, as the current GC and MC boards primarily are. Rather than be sent to the board as organizational representatives, leadership board members are chosen on the basis of abilities and needs.

Under the current MC system, AAMA, HMC and UNM have General Board seats. Church officials in the past have expressed commitments to including people of color in the integrated church's leadership. For the MC racial/ethnic groups, that meant having places on the top board. "That's what we've been asking for for a couple of years now," Barnhill says.

MC associate general secretary Miriam Book, a longtime advocate for the racial/ethnic groups, calls the change in Excutive Board composition "where we promised we would be."

The change in plans was part of the learning process, says Jim Schrag, U.S. Country Committee staff person. "The power to appoint is seen as very important," he says. "That has a different feel than having a certain racial inclusion."

Ownership and process: Unlike their MC counterparts, the GC racial/ethnic groups have not had General Board representation. MILC chair Marvin Yoyokie says the new system provides ownership. "Anytime you have a person representing you on a board that makes major decisions, that's a plus for that group," he says.

Says AAMA board member Kenyetta Aduma, "We're part of the process."

But having Executive Board representation does not automatically eliminate racial concerns. "It's a step forward, and we just have to see how it's going to work," Yoyokie says.

CHM Hispanic Resources Ministries director Gilberto Flores, while welcoming the board seats, says inclusion at all levels of church life is still necessary. Otherwise, he fears the racial/ethnic groups will only be seen as an appendage of the new church.

"We are the church," Flores says. "If they want a multiracial church, the Anglos need to understand that ... the minorities are part of the church."—*Rich Preheim*

Diversity stressed in new church

Diversity is one of the goals of the new integrated Mennonite Church, says the committee responsible for developing the U.S. church structure.

The U.S. Country Committee, in its final report to the general boards, emphasizes "incorporating a balance of racial/ethnic, gender, theological and age diversity into all aspects of organizational life and participation."

To that end, the committee has created several "assumptions" for filling all elected and appointed positions on churchwide boards:

- Equal number of men and women
- Twenty percent people of color. As with the new Executive Board (see story, right), the people of color will be appointed by the racial/ethnic groups.
- Forty percent members of the former General Conference Mennonite Church and 60 percent members of the former Mennonite Church for the first 10 years of the new church.

—*Rich Preheim*

Iraqi sanctions 'war by other means'

Lack of adequate health care helping crush population

MCC photo by Iris de Leon-Hartshorn

Iraqis remove rubble in a Basra neighborhood hit in a U.S.-British missile attack in January.

AKRON, Pa.—More than military weapons are causing pain and damage in Iraq, learned four North Americans who were members of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) peace delegation to the country last month.

Periodic missile attacks by the United States and Great Britain have destroyed buildings and injured people. But most Iraqis wanted to talk with the delegation about the effects of international sanctions imposed on their country since 1990.

After hearing the stories and seeing their impact, delegation member Dale Taylor, MCC Canada associate executive director, calls the sanctions "a war by other means."

Delegation members visited hospitals in Baghdad, Basra and Nasiriya, noting how personnel were struggling with irregular supplies of medicines, bed sheets, incubators and IV stands. No new medical or scientific publications have been allowed into the country for more than eight years. Doctors feel increasingly uneasy about using new drugs, received through humanitarian or United Nations oil-for-food provisions, because they are unfamiliar with treatment protocols.

Hospitals have become a place where people go to die instead of recover, says delegation member John Rempel of MCC's U.N. office. MCC has helped provide medical supplies, but it is not nearly enough. "In numerous settings we were thanked for MCC aid, but people also said, 'Please realize that the ultimate problem we face is sanctions,' " Rempel says. "Iraqis said they feel as though they have no voice, as though the outside world isn't listening."

MCC is now helping rebuild deteriorating schools and has purchased high quality tomato seeds for distribution. MCC worker Carmen Pauls, who has served in the West Bank, will go to Baghdad this month to administer MCC aid for the next six months.

Back in the United States, Rempel plans to advocate for Iraqis at U.N. offices in New York. His message: "It's immoral by almost any code of ethics to be a major contributor in crushing a whole civilian population and its institutions."

A history buff and biblical scholar, Rempel enjoyed seeing sites mentioned in the Bible, such as Abraham's birthplace of Ur and particularly the ancient city of Babylon. "It reminded me that while Europeans were living in primitive conditions, people in Babylon were inventing legal codes," he says. "Iraq is an ancient civilization, and much of our own culture is derived from this part of the world."

The peace delegation was MCC's fourth in the past two years. Other members of the March delegation were Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries; Ted Koontz, a Mennonite theologian from Elkhart, Ind.; and James Kwantes, a Canadian journalist.—*MCC News Service*

Pencils make point for peace with Iraq

Seattle Mennonite Church wants to leave a mark of love on Iraq. That is why the congregation sent nearly 400 pencils to the country, which is struggling under international sanctions. Those sanctions prohibit the importation of even pencils.

The pencils plus letters from the congregation's children were sent to Iraq last month with Voices in the Wilderness, a pacifist organization working against the sanctions.

"The occasion also offered the opportunity to discuss the situation in Iraq with our children's Sunday school classes," says Sunday school teacher Marsha Miller, "to explain why pencils are banned for import to Iraq, along with so many other things, from dolls to musical instruments, by U.S. and U.N. economic sanctions."

Peace lecturer explores depression and silence

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Jeff Gundy admires the faith of his Mennonite ancestors. But the Bluffton College professor also believes they had lives pockmarked by depression.

"They were not people trained in, or comfortable with, expressing themselves fully or clearly, especially about their feelings," Gundy told a Bluffton College audience on April 6. "Their community, with its long tradition of quiet, almost wordless faith, did not encourage questions or even much discussion of loss, grief and doubt."

Gundy was this year's C. Henry Smith Peace Lecturer, awarded by Bluffton and Goshen (Ind.) colleges. Through personal experiences, family stories and research, he probed understandings, fears and stereotypes of depression and responses to it. Gundy has also presented his lecture at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Goshen College; and last month's Mennonite Health Assembly.

Living her faith means not paying bribes

MEDA worker in Tanzania wants to lead by example

Schwartz

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania—You can see it in many offices in Tanzania—a wall slogan declaring, "You are now entering a corruption-free zone."

It's a nice thought, says Trudi Schwartz. But too often that's all it is. "Bribery, graft—it's still there," says Schwartz, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) Tanzania country manager. "There's so much of it."

Some foreign workers regard such corruption as a mere custom to which visitors must adjust. But Schwartz sees it in moral terms. One of the ways she shares her faith is to resist giving in to bribery and graft. That, however, can be time consuming and expensive.

Last year, for example, she and her husband purchased a vehicle from a World Bank official who was leaving the country. Getting a vehicle registered can involve miles of red tape. At each step along the way is a bureaucrat who might move a little faster with the help of a small bribe.

Schwartz was determined to do things by the book, even if it meant jumping through extra hoops and putting up with a lot of foot-dragging. It took nearly five months of running from one office to the next before the transaction was completed. If she had been willing to spend $100 to grease palms, the entire process would have taken a few days.

"Sometimes life would be very much easier if you were willing to bend on a principle," Schwartz says.

On another occasion, she and her husband rented a house for $1,500 a month. In Tanzania, tenants withhold a 15 percent tax from their rent and pay it directly to the government on behalf of the landlord. In this case, the landlord wanted the Schwartzes to sign two contracts—one for MEDA's auditors showing the actual amount of the rent and the other a dummy contract for the government claiming the rent was only $700. The landlord's plan was for the Schwartzes to withhold tax on $700 rather than $1,500, with the difference going into his pocket.

This would be not only unethical but also dangerous, Schwartz says. A random audit by the revenue authorities would have uncovered the fraud, exposing herself as well as MEDA to serious consequences and possible deportation. The Schwartzes had to give up the house.

Many foreign agencies pay the bribes, euphemistically called "tea money." Some businesses actually budget funds for this purpose. "There are so many people who do it, you seem like an oddity if you don't go along with it," Schwartz says.

As a manager and as a foreigner, she knows that many eyes are watching her behavior. "It's one thing to talk about your faith," Schwartz says. "You also have to lead by example."—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

Banking on the Bible

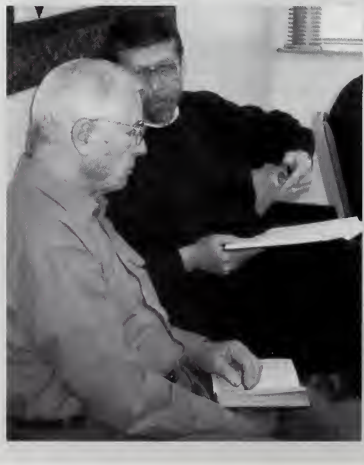


Photo by Mark Vincent

Charles Frederick (left) from First Mennonite Church in Iowa City, Iowa, and Bob Smith, one of the congregation's pastors, examine Scripture references during a March 27 gathering sponsored by the Giving Project, the Mennonite stewardship initiative. Fifty-one people attended the event, held in Iowa City. Sessions were held on mercy ministry, dedicating offerings and preaching and teaching.

Brazil Mennonite Church sends first missionaries

CEILANDIA, Brazil—Less than a year after organizing its mission board, the Brazil Mennonite Church (AEM) has sent its first overseas mission workers.

More than 100 people gathered March 27 to say good-bye to Joao and Rosa de Brito and their 11-year-old daughter, Keren. The family left April 11 for Tete, Mozambique, where they will work in Bible teaching, leadership training and support of the fledgling Mennonite church in the country.

JMMI, the AEM mission board, was formed last July after several years of discussion. Efforts to get the venture off the ground have been hampered by a number of problems, most recent being a dramatic drop in the value of the Brazilian currency.—*JMMI News Service*

Youth program numbers increase in past year

ELKHART, Ind.—The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church experienced an increase in participation in their short-term youth mission programs in 1998 as 1,326 people served assignments ranging from one week to 10½ months.

Group Venture reported the most participants with 1,207, an increase of 103 over 1996. In even years, participation has exceeded 1,000, while in the odd years, which coincide with Mennonite youth conventions, numbers are usually between 400 and 600. Group Venture offers North American assignments to church groups.

Youth Venture had the biggest increase in participants, jumping from 20 in 1997 to 54 last year. Youth Venture provides two- to four-week service assignments in five North American locations; Bogotá, Colombia; and Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Service Adventure had 65 participants in 1998, up 30 percent over 1997 and 51 percent over 1996. Service Adventure places youth between the ages of 17 and 20 in 10½-month assignments in one of 10 locations across North America.

The three programs are joint efforts of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

"Service is important to this generation," says Phil Waite, MBM coordinator for Service Adventure. "Some of the optimistic views [of their parents' generation] have been passed on."

Economics is one factor pushing program participants, says Del Hershberger, MBM short-term missions coordinator. "Young people know they will have debt when they graduate from college, and they are anxious to do service before college," he says.

Hershberger is optimistic the programs will continue to grow if youth are given the opportunity to serve. "It is the nature of young people to believe they can make a difference," he says. "If adults demonstrate a faith in them and encourage them to make a difference, they will do it."—*MBM News Service*

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Taiwan church calls proposed alternative service law 'best solution'

NEWTON, Kan.—The Mennonite church in Taiwan has endorsed a proposed law to allow alternatives to compulsory military service.

"We … believe that the principles of love should be applied to international relations," the executive committee of the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) says in a statement. "Therefore, we consider war as an evil in which we should not participate."

Taiwanese men are currently required to do two years of military service. Under the law, which is expected to be enacted, conscientious objectors will have options such as fighting fires or working on environmental projects.

The FOMCIT statement calls the proposed law "the best solution" for reconciling religious beliefs with national concerns.—*GCMC News Service*

Native groups move on organizational unity

GOSHEN, Ind.—Representatives of the Mennonite Native groups say they are on track for integration, no matter what the larger church does. What's more, they want their organization to span the U.S.-Canada border.

Representatives from the three Native groups—Mennonite Indian Leaders Council of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), United Native Ministries of the Mennonite Church (MC) and Native Ministries Committee of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC)—met together in Goshen March 25-26. They decided to move ahead with their own integration.

Leaders of the three groups also decided to draft a statement that, according to Native belief, the U.S.-Canada border doesn't separate them, even if it will be the dividing line for establishing a two-country denominational structure. The Native groups are drafting a statement to bring to the GC-MC-CMC general boards' meeting in South Bend, Ind., April 22-24.—*GCMC-MC-CMC news services*

EMU to confer degrees on 350 students

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) will start the commencement season by granting undergraduate, graduate and seminary degrees April 24-25.

Eighteen seminary students will receive degrees and certificates on April 24 in the school's 50th annual graduation ceremony. Willard Swartley, academic dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., will give the commencement address.

On April 25, 332 EMU students will receive degrees, including two associate degrees and 34 master of arts degrees. The commencement speaker will be Herma B. Williams, professor of education leadership at George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

After one year and 10 homes, MDS finishes job

SANFORD, Fla.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) last month completed a year-long response in Sanford, having rebuilt 10 homes. The community was hit by tornado-producing storms in February 1998, followed by wildfires four months later. Seven of the homes were destroyed by tornadoes and three by fire.

Dedication services for nine of the homes were held during the final week of the project. MDS presented each homeowner with a Bible and a comforter. The comforters were made especially for the homeowners by U.S. Mennonite congregations and sewing circles.

More than 800 MDS volunteers served in Sanford from March 1998 through March 1999, repairing and rebuilding homes.—*MCC News Service*

MBM wins two communication awards

ELKHART, Ind.—Two Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM)staff members have received DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Communications Awards of Excellence from the Religious Communicators Council, an interfaith organization.

Art director Ken Gingerich won an award for his design work on the winter 1998 issue of *Missions Now,* MBM's quarterly magazine. Gingerich and director of communications Tom Price shared an award for a series of three posters on MBM's mission and ministry. Each poster emphasized one aspect: witnessing, nurturing and healing.—*MBM News Service*

by the way ...

Evangelist and educator Amos Wenger in 1895 became the first "old" Mennonite minister to go on to higher education after ordination, attending Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa.
—Vision, Doctrine, War

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Second century commission

Members of Lancaster Conference's Philadelphia district are commissioned for a fruitful second century of work during a March 21 ceremony at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School. 1999 is the centennial year for Lancaster Conference work in Philadelphia. Pictured are (front row, left to right): Lemuel So and Sing Kin So, pastors of Love Truth Chinese Mennonite Church; Antonio and Pollie Alcantara, pastors of Kapatiran Christian Church; (back row, left to right) Tim Leaman, son of former Oxford Circle Mennonite Church pastor Jim Leaman; and Leonard Dow, pastor of Oxford Circle.

Births

Breckbill, Elizabeth Detwiler, March 8, to Bruce and Jill (Detweiler) Breckbill, Kidron, Ohio.
Carlson, Sierra Kate, March 22, to Erica Carlson and Scott Kraehling, Arthur, Ont.
Deavers, Rebecca Ashley, March 28, to Mark and Michell (Whitmer) Deavers, Kouts, Ind.
Eby, Eliana Joy, March 14, to Andrew and LaRee (Miller) Eby, Portland, Ore.
Fitzgerald, Noah Edward, March 2, to Emily (Hobgood) and Henry Fitzgerald III, Tyro, Va.
Hearing, Lauryn Maria, March 24, to Jim Jr., and Lorie Hearing, Lansdale, Pa.
High, Zachary Robert, March 10, to Ann (Groff) and Robert High, Chambersburg, Pa.
Mayer, Caleb Dean, Feb. 21, to Emily (Zehr) and Jeff Mayer, Lowville, N.Y.
Miller, Garrett Lee, March 6, to Dave and Trinia (Steiner) Miller, Plain City, Ohio.
Miller, Hallie Laurel, March 14, to Dave and Tammy (Hofstetter) Miller, Dalton, Ohio.
Myers, Madison Louise, March 31, to Sean and Suzanne Myers, Telford, Pa.
Short, Noah Michael, April 1, to Rita (Stoltz) and Wendell Short, Archbold, Ohio.
Steffen, Elijah John, March 22, to Greg and Michelle (Hummel) Steffen, Kidron, Ohio.
Steffen, Jacob David, Feb. 22, to Anthony and Rita (Hess) Steffen, Kidron, Ohio.
Steiner, Tad Lee, March 27, to Judith (Dosh) and T. R. Steiner, Bluffton, Ohio.
Thorsen, Zoe Corina, March 15, to Denise Thorsen and Dave Withoft, Boulder, Colo.
Zuniga, Taylor Alexander, March 5, to Dawn (Taylor) and Stephen Zuniga, Apple Creek, Ohio.

Marriages

Amack/Friesen: Jason Amack, Lincoln, Neb. and Shelly Friesen, Henderson, Neb., March 20 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lincoln.
Barnett/Kennell: Shane Barnett, Peoria, Ill., and Amy Kennell, Peoria, March 6.
Goff/Thompson: Patricia Goff, Haven, Kan., and Greg Thompson, Hutchinson, Kan., March 20 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Ballard, Stanley, 83, Enid, Okla., died March 27. Spouse: Winona Pearson Ballard (deceased). Parents: Arreliros and Iris Ballard (deceased). Survivors: stepson Gary Dean Bush; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 31 at Enid.
Dick, Katherine Goossen, 92, Henderson, Neb., died March 16. Spouse: Abe Dick (deceased). Parents: John and Aganetha Goossen (deceased). Survivors: children Mable Siebert, Blanche Franz, Kenneth; 10 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 19 at Henderson.
Hoffman, Viveron Ellis, 84, Goshen, Ind., died March 21. Spouse: Nora Weaver Hoffman. Parents: Moses and Magdalene Hershberger Hoffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Anita Yoder, Jeraldine Burkholder, DeVon; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; five stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: March 25 at Goshen.
Keller, Howard, 83, Dublin, Pa., died Feb. 24 from injuries in an auto accident. Parents: Newberry and Katie Swartz Keller (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 27 at Perkasie, Pa.
Kliewer, Helen Ott, 77, Henderson, Neb., died March 19. Spouse: Ben Kliewer (deceased). Parents: Cornelius and Katharina Ott (deceased). Survivors: children Ardell, Elmiran, Jane Brehm, LaVonne Friesen; 11 grandchildren. Memorial service: March 22 at Henderson.
Krehbiel, Howard, 72, Bluffton, Ohio, died March 30. Spouse: Evelyn Nunemaker Krehbiel. Parents: Ernest and Clara Lowenberg Krehbiel (deceased). Other survivors: children Jon, Steven, Annette Hilty, Connie Nunemaker; four grandchildren. Funeral: March 30 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
Lowe, Betty, 72, Wadsworth, Ohio, died March 22. Spouse: Dale Lowe. Other survivors: children Victor, Cliff; one grandchild. Funeral: March 25 at First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth.
Miller, Robert William, 3, Hammondsport, N.Y., died March 17 of cancer. Parents: J. R. and Kimberly Burguess Miller. Other survivor: brother Shaun. Funeral: March 22 at Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church, Hammondsport.
Paul, Carolyn Burgess, 67, Chalfont, Pa., died March 24. Spouse: (1st) John Burgess (deceased); (2nd) John Paul (deceased). Parents: Norman and Ethel Worman Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Burgess Mercure, Judith Burgess Cassidy; four grandchildren. Funeral: March 29 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Wiens, John Curtis, 74, Newton, Kan., died March 17. Spouse: Catherine Regier Wiens. Parents: John and Frieda Janzen Wiens (deceased). Other survivors: children Timothy, Mary Beth Malone; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Woodcook, Viola, 91, Omaha, Neb., died March 8. Survivors: son Art; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 12 at Vinton Street Chapel, Omaha.

Continuing Education events at AMBS this summer

Church Administration and Leadership
June 11-12, 1999

Presenter:
Del Glick, D.Min., conference minister, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference; Moderator-elect of the Mennonite Church

Explore how congregational administration can bless, empower and bring healing and hope.

Fee: $65
Register by June 1.

Spirituality and Addiction
June 11-12, 1999

Presenter:
Brice Balmer, D.Min., chaplain, House of Friendship, Kitchener, Ont.; practicum instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University Graduate School of Social Work.

Examine addiction, dysfunction and codependence through the lenses of theology, spirituality and pastoral counseling.

Fee: $65
Register by June 1.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a ***system administrator/programmer*** (relevant experience desirable). Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., Attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp** needs ***caretaker:*** semi-retired couple to handle general maintenance and cleaning at growing camp in south central Pennsylvania. Housing provided. Should have some mechanical ability.

  Send resume to Cove Valley Christian Youth Camp, Caretaker Search, 5357 Little Cove Rd., Mercersburg, PA 17236; 717-328-3055.

- **Community Mennonite Church**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks a full-time ***co-pastor***. Significant experience, a strong pastoral identity, gifts in worship and administration are desired. Women candidates will receive strong consideration. Contact Herm Weaver by May 9 at weaverhh@emu.edu or 1018 S. College Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4427.

- **Rosthern Junior College**, a residential Mennonite high school, invites applications for ***boys' residence dean*** (full-time); part-time teaching positions in areas of ***chemistry, drama, Christian ethics***; part-time ***admissions, spiritual life coordinator***. Contact Erwin Tiessen, principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0; 306-232-4222; fax 306-232-5250; email rjc.01@sk.sympatico.ca

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***assistant principal.*** Full-time position requires leadership abilities in the areas of curriculum scheduling, daily school management and student relationships.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Glencroft Retirement Community** in Glendale, Ariz., seeks a ***licensed administrator*** to lead its 225-bed health care center. Candidates should have a successful track record in large facilities, excellent communications skills, ability to lead in a team setting, and an appreciation for the mission of a church-related, not-for-profit organization.

  Applicants should send their resume to Jenny Yoder, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 300) invites applications for 1999-2000 teaching positions: ***English 12*** (40% position), ***German 9-12*** (60% position), and ***biology/environmental science 9-12*** (full-time, one-year term). Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions in the 1999-2000 school year: ***guidance counselor*** (half-time position); ***athletic director***: one-year sabbatical leave fill-in position, responsible for the administration of a 14-sport athletic program; ***art teacher; mathematics teacher; physical education teacher***.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Community Mennonite Early Learning Center** needs ***director*** for a large child-care center in a south suburb of Chicago serving infants and preschool children of low-income families. Master's degree in EC preferred with administration and teaching experience in a child-care center required. Responsibilities include staff supervision and training, board development, overseeing budget, scheduling, curriculum development and implementation, interaction with parents, fund-raising and maintaining accreditation. Experience working in a cross-cultural setting important.

  Address resumes to Michael Devine by May 1 by fax 708-333-1248; email CMELC3@aol.com; or to Community Mennonite Early Learning Center, 3215 W. 162nd St., Markham, IL 60426; 708-798-8981.

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Indian Creek Foundation**, a midsized and growing nonprofit agency providing a full array of services to people with developmental disabilities in the upper Bucks/Mont area, is currently seeking a ***chief operating officer***. Direct agency activities in operations, human resources, financial performance and growth initiatives; develop and implement corporate operations systems; and manage and allocate human and capital resources. Direct development and implementation of short- and long-range plans and serve as head of management team. A master's degree in a related field; 7-10 years experience in the MR field; a proven track record in nonprofit senior management; and excellent analytical, problem-solving and leadership skills are deemed necessary for success in this position.

  Please fwd resume and salary req to HR, Indian Creek Foundation, P.O. Box 225, Harleysville, PA 19438; fax 215-256-3018. EOE

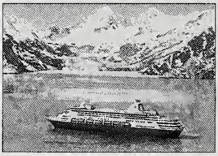
- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks:

  Degree completion program representative for its adult degree completion program. Bachelor's degree required. Experience in promotion, marketing, advertising, public relations and strategic planning essential. Must possess strong communication skills.

  Catalog librarian, full-time, 10 months, sabbatical replacement. Knowledge of and experience with MARC format, DDC, LCSH, AACR2, OCLC required. ALA accredited MLS, preferred.

  Appointments June 1999. EMU seeks people who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae and three references to William Hawk, VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer

- **Holly Grove Christian School** is currently accepting applications for the 1999-2000 school year. We have a vacancy for a full-time secondary ***math/science teacher***. All interested parties should send resume to 7317 Mennonite Church Road, Westover, MD 21871 or call 410-957-0222 M-F 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Holly Grove Christian School does not discriminate in its employment practices based on race, color, national and ethnic origins. Our school is associated with Holly Grove Mennonite Church.



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by Rich Preheim

Sign of the times

Want to show your lifelong commitment to your faith? Some are making a lifelong mark on their bodies.

Tattoos—long the domain of sailors, bikers, gang members, basketball players and other rebels—have been growing in popularity among other members of society. And that includes more and more Christians who are using it as an expression of their beliefs.

Derrick Rachul, a 27-year-old Canadian Bible school student, had a stylized image of Jesus on the cross tattooed on his upper arm 2½ years ago. The next summer he went to Hawaii with Youth With a Mission to do evangelism among surfers.

"I met a guy that had a whole pile of tattoos—demons, naked women, the whole bit," Rachul tells *ChristianWeek*. "He noticed my tattoo and asked me about it, what it meant. We talked for quite a while actually. I told him I'm a Christian and talked about what it represents."

One tattoo artist, who might have done one or two religious tattoos in the previous decade, reported doing 50 in six months last year. The growth has been so significant that last year almost 100 U.S. tattoo parlors formed the Christian Tattoo Association.

Repaying good with good

The folks at St. James Lutheran Church in the industrial Michigan city of Jackson know full well where cornflakes originate and that milk doesn't just come from the grocery store. So, according to *The Lutheran*, they were distressed to observe crop and livestock prices worsen in the past year and decided to do something to help family farmers.

"It's ironic," says St. James pastor Dave Brobston. "People who feed the world are struggling to put food on their own tables."

Working with the South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, St. James last fall started raising money to "Feed a Farmer." The money was sent to Egeland Lutheran Church in Waubay, S.D. Around Christmas, Egeland pastor Duane Neugebauer gave each of 12 needy farmers from the congregation a $100 gift from St. James.

"More than anything, it brought a bright note to their holiday," Neugebauer says.

Y2K watch: Don't forget the wine and wafers

Some Christians are going into a selfish survival mode, hoarding food, ammunition and other supplies to weather any impending Y2K bug-induced crash. But other believers see a potential time to serve others. *The Wesleyan Advocate*, for example, suggests congregations start a Y2K pantry and every family bring one canned food item to church every week. But such Christian responses can also be bound by denominational practices. *National Catholic Reporter* says one priest urges, in addition to food and toilet paper, stocking up on sacramental supplies.

Territory's birth, religion's growth

A new political age dawned April 1 when the eastern half of Canada's Northwest Territories became a separate territory called Nunavut, governed by the indigenous Inuit people. So too, say Christian leaders in the region, a new age is dawning spiritually, reports *Faith Today.*

One ministry among the Inuit, Harvest Field, reports attendance at its annual conferences has grown from 15 people per conference in the 1980s to 1,000 today. At Harvest Field's 1998 Easter conference, 20 percent of one community made decisions for Christ. And since 1994, Inuit teams have gone into Russia, evangelizing people who maintain a lifestyle much like that of the Inuit's forebears.

Says Roger Armbruster, Harvest Field's northern director, "I believe this is revival in the truest sense."

Spirit through the sky

Among the indigenous population in the United States, plans are being developed for a Native American Christian TV network. Jose Alvarez says God led his family from Miami, where he had a successful broadcasting career, to the Southwest, with its sparsely populated Navajo and Hopi reservations dotted with satellite dishes.

According to *Indian Life*, the network would have only Christian Native American preachers and teachers. "The great need for churches and evangelism would be satisfied by having the gospel preached via Native airwaves," Alvarez says.

A committee is working to get the plan off the ground. The network would be overseen by an interdenominational board of directors.

Tidbits

- One program to train Christian lay leaders in China devotes one evening a week to teaching students how to sing in four-part harmony. *—Amity News Service*
- Forty-nine percent of U.S. Catholic priests and 37 percent of nuns say it is always or often a sin for a married couple to use artificial methods of birth control.*—International Conference of Population and Development*
- Twenty-five thousand people convert to Islam each month.*—Evangelical Visitor*
- Catholic Charities says the demand for emergency food assistance in the United States increased by 26 percent in the first half of 1998.*—Bread for the World*

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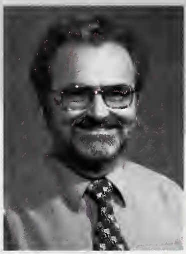

J. Lorne Peachey

The shame of being Christian

Usually I'm happy to identify myself as a follower of Jesus. There are times, however, when, because of what's being done in the name of Christ, I'd almost rather not be known as a Christian. Like now.

I became aware of this while watching NBC news with Tom Brokaw on Good Friday. In trying to make sense of the complex situation in the former Yugoslavia, Brokaw told us that it is Serbs—Orthodox Christians—who are working to get rid of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians—Muslims. "What an irony that this should take place during this most holy week in the Christian calendar," Brokaw said.

Brokaw could have also drawn attention to the greater irony of NATO nations, many of whom the world also sees as Christian, trying to stop Serbian Christians with violence. So we have Christians killing Christians to stop Christians from exterminating Muslims. A simplistic view, to be sure, but I suspect it's one that makes most sense to much of the world. It also makes me hang my head in shame.

Of course, I want to protest. Those who are killing can't be true Christians. They don't understand the way of Jesus to love one's enemies. But likely this falls on deaf ears. While I know there are varieties of Muslims, I haven't taken the time to learn the difference. To me a Muslim is a Muslim, a Hindu a Hindu, a Jew a Jew. I suspect the same is true for the rest of the world when they look at Christians.

Today we have Christians killing Christians to stop Christians from exterminating Muslims. A simplistic view, to be sure, but one that makes most sense to much of the world.

So what should we peace-loving, nonresistant, pacifist Mennonites in North America do when Christians are fighting Christians who are killing Muslims in another part of the world? A few modest suggestions:

- **Acknowledge our shame.** To pretend we aren't embarrassed, to suggest that we're different because we think we follow Jesus more closely won't cut it in our kind of world. We need to acknowledge that the Balkan evil stems in part from Christians, Christians we disagree with, to be sure, but people who still call themselves Christian.
- **Get rid of triumphalist language.** Easter, especially, when we celebrate the Risen Lord, can bring out language of winning and losing: We will conquer all. To the rest of the world what's happening in Kosovo must surely look as though Christians have decided to make it happen in our own strength right now. How much better the language of humility and contrition at this time.
- **Give up our need to be right.** Evil like the Kosovo conflict doesn't hatch full-blown. It starts with small challenges to beliefs and values. That I recognize in myself: the need to be right, the anger and violence that too easily churn within when my "right" is challenged.
- **Support efforts to bring relief.** As reported in our last two issues, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions are at work distributing refugee aid and assessing what more needs to be done. These agencies will no doubt have many ways for us to bring comfort to the suffering in the future.
- **Support peacemaking efforts.** MCC personnel report it is easy to get us to respond to relief needs in places like Kosovo. It is much more difficult to garner support for a project like SEMILLA, an Anabaptist-Mennonite seminary in Central America heavily involved in teaching peacemaking to Christians in several violent societies. Our best energies and dollars must go for the long-term solutions.
- **Reaffirm our commitment to the way of peace.** When we see what appears to be injustice, as in Serbs systematically killing Kosovars, the temptation is to wonder if a "military solution" isn't the only way this time. What we forget is that every conflict seems to have its "right" and "wrong" side—sides to which war and violence have never worked. As Anabaptist-Mennonites, we need to recommit ourselves to our Master, who told us to love and pray for all our enemies.

In the end, whatever our efforts, we might do well to pray a prayer about the human condition we can learn from Jesus: "Father, forgive them. Forgive us. None of us quite know what we are doing."—*jlp*

the Mennonite

April 27, 1999

teach your children well

6 Three Rs and an L
8 The perfect dream
12 Bringing the church to Generation X
20 Outbursts of love and good deeds

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Taxation without salvation?

I agree with Marian Franz ("The Claims of God and Caesar," April 6) when she says weapons of war are "too weak to clothe and feed, embrace and educate, heal and make whole." Most importantly, however, they are also too weak to provide eternal salvation to the lost. Salvation comes through Christ alone. No ministry of mercy should lack the ministry of the good news of salvation. While I find the statistics in the article as staggering as she does, I believe a peek into our own house would uncover some spending that could better go toward the ministries of mercy and evangelism. I expect a pagan government to act in pagan ways. Yet I hold the church to a different standard. I think of all the resources such as time, money and print space that have been spent on the debate over homosexuality. Those resources could have been used to clothe and feed, embrace and educate, heal and make whole.

As pacifists, we need to be careful not to erect a stumbling block to the gospel. Pacifism is secondary to the question, "What are you doing with Jesus?" This needs to be our first concern in a world of people that are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Pacifism without Christ is ultimately meaningless. Physical peace without spiritual peace through Christ is limited and temporary. I have never read in Scripture that a person can get right with God through being a good pacifist. To non-Christian pacifists, we need to give the gospel of Christ. To non-Christian supporters of war, we need to give the gospel of Christ. Can someone come to Christ without being a pacifist? Yes.—*Michael Danner, Roanoke, Ill.*

Thanks for the April 6 issue on praying for peace and paying for war. It was excellent. —*Daniel Cruz, Goshen, Ind.*

Bearing our crosses

The March 23 issue leads us from the agony of the cross to a challenge to participate with joy in sanctified living. Could returnees such as those in "Back in the United States, Missionary Children Struggle With Forced Departure From Assignment" be part of the Holy Spirit's nudging—and sometimes provoking—us to more daily scriptural cross-bearing? How easy it is to live like those around us. Who can deny that too many of our decisions are determined by a self-serving, pampered culture and its expectations? Continue to force us to look and think beyond our own comfortable agendas.—*Dorcas S. Miller, Greenwood, Del.*

Balkans problems

Re "MCC Sends Aid as NATO Sends Bombs" (April 6): If Mennonite Central Committee wrote a letter to President Clinton, was a letter also written to Slobodon Milosevic decrying his terrifying campaign of ethnic purging against the Kosovar Albanians? This appears to me to be appeasement and not peacemaking. With all due respect to Jasmina Tosic, I would return the same questions to her. How can Eastern Orthodox Christians accept that the only way to resolve centuries of geographical and ethnic disputes is with more violence? Why doesn't Serbia be more creative in finding nonviolent solutions to its own problems?

Where do we promote peacemaking before the military actions start? I have seen nothing proactive by the Mennonite church or by MCC in all of the Balkans conflict. Only when terrible things happen do we react by speaking out and sending aid.—*George Hostetler, Richmond, Va.*

Untimely deaths

In the April 6 issue, at least twice, concern for the world's children is mentioned by using the appalling statistic that 32,000 die each day due to lack of nutrition and vaccines. Are we as a "peace church" equally concerned by the fact that, in the United States alone, 1.2 million preborn children are killed for convenience or profit each year? In our world, far more children daily suffer violent death from the abortionist (who also inflicts violence on the mother) than die of natural causes. We as Mennonite Christians must make our voices heard to stop the untimely death of children. As we do, let us include the millions of preborn children who are being denied their God-given right of protection and safety.—*David H. Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

Scriptural assistance

In his letter in the April 6 issue, Verle Hoffman invites readers' assistance in finding texts that indicate that the uncircumcised are excluded from God's people. I'm happy to contribute to our brother's study of Scripture by submitting one I came across when preparing a sermon on Peter and Cornelius: Genesis 17:14. —*Catherine Hunsberger, Waterloo, Ont.*

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Vol. 2, No. 16, April 27, 1999

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readers say

Crucified with Roman help

Jacob Stoltzfus' letter in the March 23 issue picks up an error by R. Brent Alderfer and Vern Rempel in the March 2 issue ("A Symphony in Three Movements")—that Jesus Christ was crucified "for his interpretation of Scripture and life of faith." Indeed, Jesus got into hot water and repeated trouble for his interpretation of Scripture and life of faith, but to say he was crucified for that is to say subtly that the Jews crucified Jesus. A Roman court of law passed sentenced on Jesus, without which he could not have been crucified. Simultaneously, the court acknowledged Jesus' innocence (John 18:38) and sentenced him anyway. Jesus was crucified by Roman soldiers who had no knowledge of Hebrew-Aramaic Scriptures; their actions were the direct cause of Jesus' physical death.

Additionally, Stoltzfus' statement that a Christian-Mennonite church must have the Scriptures as its foundations echoes St. Jerome, who wrote, "For ignorance of the Scripture is ignorance of Christ."—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

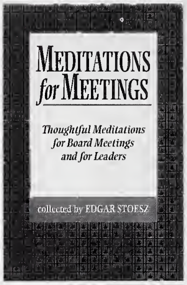
Holy matrimony

Let the wedding bells ring! That is, the wedding of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. If we wait until every problem is solved, it will never happen. Jesus accepted tax collectors and prostitutes. And they changed. If we exclude one group of "sinners," what about adulterers, tax cheaters, greedy people, proud people, tale bearers?

It seems Jesus "forgot" to condemn the very issue that is causing the most trouble with our union. Let the wedding bells ring. Enjoy the honeymoon and the years after that, and let God do the judging.—*Amos J. Kleinsasser, Bridgewater, S.D.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

New from Good Books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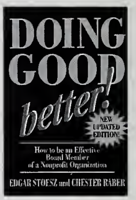
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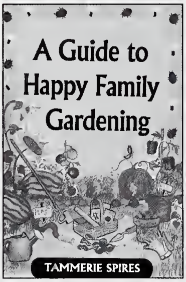
A Guide to Happy Family Gardening
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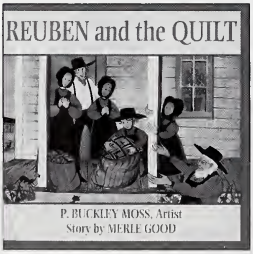
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Beggars can be choosers

by Elda Bachman

Guides said, “Don’t give money to begging children.”
How I wanted to as we walked along Calcutta’s streets!

I cried inside with pity as dirty deprived urchins pressed against me.
Outstretched hands and pleading eyes were hard to ignore.

Begging is one thing. Earning is another, I thought,
As I looked down at my dust-covered suede boots.

Many “paisa” jingled in my purse as I walked toward the small girl
Sweeping the photo shop entrance with a short feathered broom.

My gestures and the proprietor’s Bengali helped her understand.
With her flimsy broom she brushed my boots one at a time.

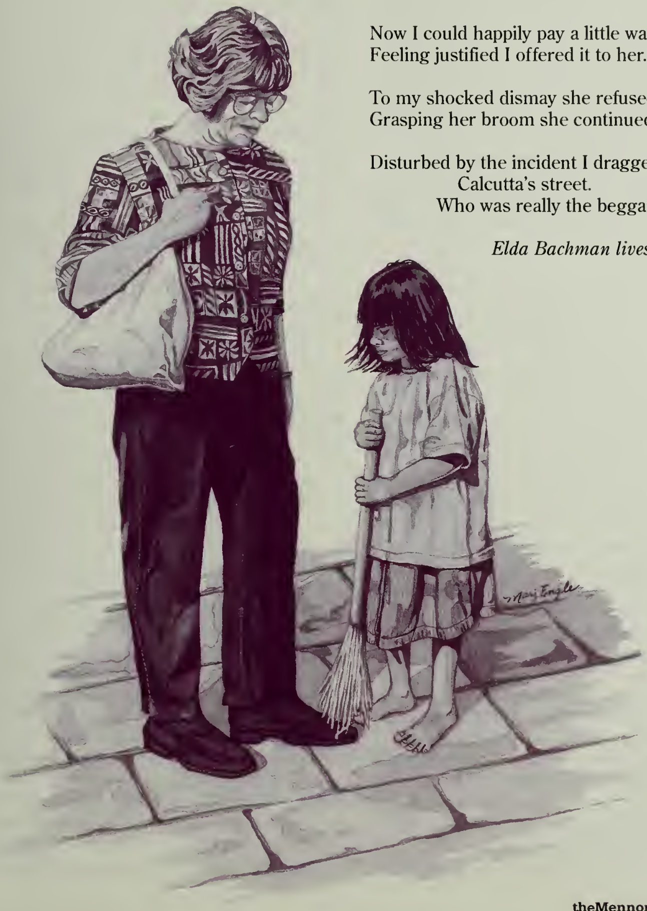
My black footwear still looked brown.
I was not surprised and did not really care.

Now I could happily pay a little wage that she had earned.
Feeling justified I offered it to her.

To my shocked dismay she refused the pay and turned away.
Grasping her broom she continued her task of sweeping.

Disturbed by the incident I dragged my feet with the crowd down
Calcutta’s street.
Who was really the beggar? Was it I, Lord?

Elda Bachman lives in North Newton, Kan.



Marj Engle

Three Rs and an L

One family's experience with home schooling

by Eddy Hall

"You know, if we're really going to consider home schooling, it's about time to talk about it," I said to Melody, my wife. Then from the back seat came a voice: "You mean I might not have to wait till next year to start school?" We had no idea that Jonathan, just turned 5, had been listening. When we told him what we were talking about, he decided for us: "I want to start school." So the next morning, even though it was Saturday, we started, and we've been doing it ever since.

That was 14 years ago. And though we were tentative at first, the longer we home school, the more we love it.

How our family does it: There are about as many ways to home school as there are home schooling families. Many families adopt a single curriculum package for all their subjects. Some have strict school hours where the teacher, usually the mom, turns on the answering machine, sits down with the kids and does nothing but teach school. In fact, some home schools are more structured than regular classrooms.

That's not our style. Much of the appeal of home schooling is the flexibility it gives us to handpick our favorite resources for each subject, shape the curriculum to each child and choose textbooks and learning methods that take only an hour or so a day of teaching time. This frees Melody and me (we share the teaching) to do our own work during school hours, while the children do their studies.

We start home schooling a child when he or she sees big brother or sister doing school and asks, "Can I do school, too?" We take a lot of our cues from our kids. Joylin asked to learn to read at age 2, so I taught her. Jeffrey asked to learn at age 4½. If we teach them when they are ready and eager to learn—on their timetable—they learn quickly and easily.

During the early grades, we use mostly discount store workbooks, supplemented generously with the reading of library books. When the kids are ready for fourth-grade level work, they move into standard grammar and math textbooks and start working with a typing tutorial program on the computer.

Rather than spending a certain number of hours in school, our children complete a certain amount of work. When they've earned their points for the day, they're done. As they get older, they do more points. On a really good day, they may finish school by lunch; when self-discipline escapes them, they can still be doing school at bedtime.

The three Rs and an L: We focus on teaching the three Rs (reading, writing and 'rithmetic) plus one more thing—how to learn. Beyond these basics (plus typing and Bible), each child chooses—within guidelines—what else to learn.

Some parents panic at the prospect of home schooling because they don't know everything their children need to learn. But if you can teach your kids how to learn, you don't have to know much at all. When Janelle took physics, most of what she learned I didn't know. But we were using an excellent self-study text, and Janelle knew how to learn. When Jonathan studied computer programming, I was clueless about what he was doing, but he had learned how to teach himself. He is now working full-time in the computer field.

How do you teach kids to learn? It involves (1) teaching them to research (they don't need to know all the answers; they do need to know how to find the answers), (2) stimulating them to think creatively and critically and (3) feeding their love of learning.

When our kids reach senior high, we give them the option of continuing to home school full-time or to home school part-time and go to public school part-time. We live a block from our high school and have a cooperative principal, so our two older kids opted to attend public school half-time, partly for social reasons but also to build ministry relationships with peers. They continued this half-and-half schedule until their senior years, when they went to public school half-time and took college courses half-time.

Pleasant surprises: Home schooling has brought some wonderful surprises. Do you remember how exciting it was to watch your child take that first step? When I first held a child on my lap to teach him to read and saw that light come on, I had that same feeling. It was magical, and after experiencing it with one child, I didn't want to miss out on it with any of the others.

I was also surprised by what home schooling did for the relationships between our children. Since they are different ages, there is little academic competitiveness between them.

There are about as many ways to home school as there are home-schooling families.

Correction: In the April 13 issue (page 9), the man next to Eugene Thieszen in the photo is senior pastor Lephophoru Malepe.

Home schooling promotes individualized instruction—each student learning at his or her own pace.

There is instead a mentoring dynamic. The younger children want to do what the older ones are doing, and the older ones delight in teaching the younger. Not only is this wonderfully educational for both, but the bonding that takes place is incredible. All five of our kids are each other's best friends, even though a 14-year age span separates the oldest and the youngest.

What about socialization? The first question many people have when they hear about home schooling is whether the children's socialization will suffer. When we started, we had the same question.

Fourteen years later, we now see positive socialization as by far the greatest benefit of home schooling. For children who grow up in classrooms, peers are role models. While the classroom setting increases peer influence, home-schooled children learn in an environment defined by relationships with adults. When our two oldest started high school, peer pressure had almost no effect on them. In fact, the whole idea of peer pressure made so little sense to them that we had to explain to them what it was. Jonathan and Janelle ended up influencing their peers, often through intentional ministry, much more than their peers influenced them.

They naturally related to their teachers confidently, seeing them more as friends than as authority figures. They knew how to think critically and were clear about their own values. This meant they didn't blindly buy into the school's institutional values but felt free to question them. Jonathan wrote a three-installment editorial for the school paper explaining, with solid documentation, why giving grades in school actually hinders rather than promotes learning.

Did we ever have trouble finding playmates for our children? Occasionally, but with church, a local group of home-schoolers and neighborhood friends, that has seldom been a problem. In exchange for putting up with that occasional inconvenience, we have enjoyed a closeness with our own children we could not have had otherwise, we are seeing five siblings grow up as best friends, and we have seen two teenagers approach adulthood with strong personal convictions, experience in ministry leadership and confidence in relating to peers and adults.

What about academics? While character and relationships are more important for us, academics don't get short-changed. All our children—and most other home schoolers—work well ahead of grade level. On the average, home schoolers score at about the 80th percentile on achievement tests, and many colleges actively recruit them for their academic excellence.

Is this because home schoolers are smarter? Probably not. But home schoolers have a huge advantage over classroom students: the student-teacher ratio. Home schooling promotes individualized instruction—each student learning at his or her own pace. When something is easy, the child zips through it and moves on, rather than being held back waiting for other students. If something is hard to understand, the child can spend however long it takes to master it.

Just as important, each child can pursue individual interests. It's like creating a separate magnet school for each child. Jonathan specialized in computers. Janelle reads prolifically. Jason leaves behind a trail of science experiments and inventions wherever he goes. Joylin is into music. Jeffrey is a budding computer artist. Not only does this approach encourage each child to excel in one area, it harnesses their natural motivation for learning. Home schoolers call this delight-oriented learning.

Our children all love to learn, something others often comment on. Every healthy child, I believe, is born with a love of learning. Almost every child is eager to start school. But it doesn't take long—usually around second or third grade—for most kids to start complaining about not liking school. Why? Having to work too fast or too slow, the lack of individualized instruction, meaningless busy work, learning that doesn't connect to a child's natural interests—these and other factors conspire to cripple or kill a child's natural love of learning.

The U.S. Department of Education estimates about 1 million students are home schooled nationwide. According to a University of Maryland study released in late March, home-schooled students are performing better on standardized tests than their peers who attend both public and private schools. The study also revealed that home schoolers come from families with higher incomes and education levels. About 88 percent of home schoolers' parents continued their education after high school, compared with 50 percent for the nation as a whole. The median income for home-school families was $52,000, compared with $36,000 for all U.S. families with children, the study said.

—The Newton Kansan

continued on next page

When Jonathan and Janelle went to public high school part-time, we realized they would be giving up some academic advantages. Sure enough, they experienced some academic frustrations, but they were willing to make that trade-off to have the chance to make more friends and develop ministry relationships.

Who should home school? When parents who are considering home schooling talk to us, usually their biggest fear is that they might not be qualified to teach. We assure them that's no problem. Almost any literate high school graduate can teach a child more effectively one-on-one than most professional teachers can in a classroom. But that's not to say every parent should take this on.

It takes two characteristics to make a good home school teacher.

First, you need to enjoy your children and want to spend more time with them. Some parents home school for negative reasons—fear (to protect their kids from the evils of secularism) or guilt ("If I were a really good parent, I would home school"). But if you don't truly enjoy home schooling, you can be pretty sure your children won't either. We love spending time with our kids (well, most of the time), and they know we spend this time with them because they are more important to us than our careers or anything else we could be doing with that time.

Second, you need to have a love for learning. The most important qualification of a good teacher is not mastery of her subject but a contagious enthusiasm for it. My favorite subject to teach is Bible, and each of our four school-age children has begged me to spend more time teaching them Bible. Why? I think it's because I experience the Bible as the most fascinating, awesome book in the world, and it didn't take the kids long to catch my enthusiasm. (It still amazes me how, as I was growing up, preachers and Sunday school teachers managed to make the Bible boring.)

If you are wanting to spend more quality time with your children and you have a love of learning, you're a great candidate for home schooling. The investment is major—lots of time, lots of energy, perhaps giving up a second income. But if what we're seeing with our children is any clue, the return on that investment can be enormous.

In fact, we expect our next 12 years of home schooling to be even better than the first 14.

Eddy Hall lives in Goessel, Kan.

If you are wanting to spend more quality time with your children and you have a love of learning, you're a great candidate for home schooling.

The perfect dream

Myron Blosser tests faith and learning in public education.

by Jim Bishop

Myron Blosser, a member of Weavers Mennonite Church near Harrisonburg, Va., has a passion for teaching, and his classroom at Harrisonburg High School is a natural venue for fulfilling it.

Myron, 37, has taught public school for the past 11 years in Harrisonburg and three years before that at nearby Strasburg High School. He currently heads the science department at Harrisonburg High, teaching honors biology, advanced placement biology to 11th and 12th graders and a nontraditional molecular genetics class.

There's no other place he'd rather be, for, as he puts it, "Here I have a dream and I go for it."

The end result, the perfect dream, he says, is "seeing my students find learning to be a holistic experience of social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth." And, he adds, "I'm learning right along with them."

Myron credits his love of science to his family and to Dave Mumaw, a veteran teacher at Eastern Mennonite High School. Myron earned a degree in biology education from Eastern Mennonite University in 1983 and completed a master's degree in education with a focus on curriculum development in 1998.

On teaching young people today, Myron observes, "One of the most difficult things I face is trying to establish an ideal teaching situation in the midst of physical and fiscal constraints. A student needs certain tools and resources to be properly motivated, otherwise learning doesn't happen. Or I may want to take a student group on a field trip, and transportation isn't available. It takes a lot of creativity to come up with alternatives. Time and money are both scarce commodities in public education."

On communicating spiritual values: "I teach science courses, but I'm big on integrating other disciplines, which for me includes faith issues," Myron says. "I encourage my students to share—they want to talk about their struggles, including spiritual questions. Faith is a

I teach science courses, but I'm big on integrating other disciplines, which for me includes faith issues.—*Myron Blosser*

natural, crucial part of everyday life, and when I acknowledge that, the stigma is gone.

"I have parents come and tell me that I am a Christian role model to their kids. In all my years of teaching, I've never had anyone tell me to be careful or try to restrict what I say."

Myron believes the public is hungry for positive experiences for students. A prime example is "Coast to Coast '98," a project in which Blosser and several teaching colleagues raised $32,000 in five months to finance a month-long trip that took 20 students to the West Coast and back last summer. The group camped in national parks and studied the water quality at each location. They set up a web site to record their findings and to make information available to others.

"Watching the sun set over the Pacific was a trip highlight and helped set a tone for times of sharing at a deep level," Myron says.

"I'm actually finding it easier to teach young people now than when I started 14 years ago," he says. "I've discovered that I don't have to know it all. My methodology is to take something and process it—see what we can do with it, using technology as an aid—and learn right along with the kids, making discoveries together.

"One of my goals is to involve students deeply in hands-on learning," he says. "In some classes, [students] get to order the materials they need and work on their own to a large extent. The amount of critical thinking and problem solving that occurs in these settings is amazing.

"The more responsibility I give my students, the more eager they are to learn for themselves because they come to own what they're doing," he says.

Myron's efforts haven't gone unnoticed, either. The National Association of Biology Teachers named him Outstanding Biology Teacher in Virginia for 1998. He was recognized at the association's conference in Reno, Nev., last November—in part for his work in devising and orchestrating the Coast to Coast project—and received science equipment from sponsoring companies as part of the award.

Every March for the past six years, Myron has spearheaded a biotechnology symposium that brings specialists and about 250 students from 10 different school districts to interact in intensive sessions dealing with techniques and issues of the manipulation of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid, the molecular basis of heredity in many organisms).

"I'm at an interesting point in my teaching career," Myron says. "Some of my fellow science teachers are nearing retirement. These veterans took me, a rookie, under their wings and showed me what it takes to be a successful department chair.

"Some of my former student teachers have since been hired to teach here [Harrisonburg High], which is rewarding to me," he says. "I definitely feel God has led me into this field. I'm fortunate to be where I am."

Jim Bishop is public information officer for Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.

Jim Bishop

Myron Blosser: "One of my goals is to involve students deeply in hands-on learning."

Ten Thousand Village's self-imposed levy may pay off for Kenyan wood carvers' group

MCC photo

Kenyans examine trees in a "good wood" nursery. Ten Thousand Villages has been supporting the cultivation of such wood species—such as jacaranda, grevillea and mango—to be used for carving in place of ebony, mahogany and other traditional woods, which are dwindling.

NAIROBI, Kenya—As the availability of wood for carving in Kenya decreases, Mennonite Central Committee has planted a seed. Now MCC can help it grow.

For the past three years, Ten Thousand Villages, MCC's job creation program, has paid a voluntary levy of 3 percent on carvings purchased from the Kenya Crafts Co-operative Union. The levy—totaling $15,000—has funded KCCU reforestation projects to replace trees cut for carving.

After learning of the MCC-KCCU project, the European Union—the political and economic organization of 15 European countries—has now offered $135,000 to hasten the development of good wood products and expand the scope of the reforestation effort. But the funding is dependent on MCC successfully recruiting a volunteer to work with forestry experts and with KCCU carvers on product development for the export market.

Kenyan carvers have traditionally preferred ebony, mahogany and African olive for their work. But those trees are dwindling and grow too slowly to sustain the current rates of harvest. So the carvers have discovered fast growing trees—called "good wood"—such as jacaranda, grevillea, mango and neem, which can also be suitable for carving if designs and techniques are adapted.

In Kenya, wood carving annually adds some $20 million to the national economy and employs 50,000 carvers. Carvers in turn create additional jobs such as harvesting wood and sanding and polishing finished carvings. For more than 15 years, Ten Thousand Villages has been purchasing wood carvings from the KCCU, which is comprised of six co-ops representing 20,000 carvers. With purchases amounting to about 1 percent of the total Kenyan output of carving, Ten Thousand Villages is one of the single biggest buyers of Kenyan wood carvings.

The country's carving industry will also get a boost from Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Through MCC, CFGB has provided funding to the SASOL Foundation, a small Kenyan conservation organization, to improve water catchment capacities in two river valleys in western Kenya. SASOL will construct a series of dams along seasonal river beds to enhance agricultural production. The plan includes planting a wide variety of tree species to provide local people with fruit, firewood and building materials as well as cash for good wood species that can be sold to carvers for carving.—*Larry Nafziger for MCC News Service*

EMU advised to preserve woods

Eastern Mennonite University has heard recommendations for preserving and enhancing a 10-acre tract of woods on the Harrisonburg, Va., campus.

"Don't waver or change the current intention to make Park Woods a preservation site," three consultants reported April 9.

Recommendations included cleaning the area, adding more plants, upgrading trails and renovating a cabin on the site. The school will apply for a grant from the state Department of Forestry to help with the project.

Jamaica jubilation

Members of the Jamaica Mennonite Church worship during their 41st annual conference last month in Kingston. The conference drew more than 50 people from 13 congregations. The weekend included the selection of a new president and secretary.

VMBM photo by David D. Yoder

Connecting Creator and the created

New effort aims to restore spirituality to food production

LITITZ, Pa.—Roy and Hope Brubaker say they went to Somalia with Eastern Mennonite Missions because they were following the commandment to love their neighbors. Now, the Brubakers say, they are organic farmers because they are following another biblical injunction—to care for the earth.

The Brubakers produce strawberries, asparagus, rhubarb and other produce on their Mifflintown, Pa., farm. The food is then sold locally and in Washington through a farmers cooperative. Among their local customers are members of their congregation, University Mennonite Church in State College.

The Brubakers were among those who told their stories at a March 27 conference, "Farming With Values That Last," held at the Midway Mennonite Reception Center at Lititz and sponsored in part by Franconia Conference's new Faith, Food and Farming Initiative. The conference was the first for the Franconia program, which was started in September 1998 as an educational effort.

"Food is the fundamental physical evidence of God's grace in ordering creation," says Greg Bowman, who serves part-time as the initiative's coordinator. "Farmers are the mediators of this miracle, a role now being trivialized by processed food and factory farms."

What is missing, he says, is a religious component. Without it, food production has become manufacturing, mixing genetics, chemicals and capitalist economics with God's creation. And that, he says, pushes out small farmers in favor of large operations and produces less nutritional food and more pollution.

"The inevitable result of unrestrained and abusive free-market forces being applied to an ecological system," he calls it. "These and other food industry and agribusiness trends tend to divorce food and land of their spiritual importance, reducing them to commodities of the marketplace."

The conference focused on the connection between the Creator and the created and between those who produce food and those who eat it. About 200 people attended to hear presentations on agricultural capital, markets and passing down family farms. A forum on faith and farming gave participants on opportunity to share their own experiences and observations.

"You will come up with the wrong conclusions 100 percent of the time when you don't start with the right foundation," said Roman Stoltzfoos, a Beachy Amish farmer from Kinzers, Pa.

He has a 100-cow dairy herd and organically raises about 8,000 turkeys. He said farming organically has helped him control expenses and increase his income.

Photo by David Hiebert

Greg Bowman (left), coordinator of Franconia Conference's Faith, Food and Farming Initiative, visits with Marian Bowlan during a March 27 conference at Lititz, Pa. Bowlan is a staff member for a Pennsylvania organization that provides assistance in retaining farm ownership for families.

Katy Reist of Washington Boro, Pa., told of her 35-member community-assisted agriculture group, of which about a fourth are from her congregation of Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa. Members join at the beginning of the growing season and work the land with the Reist family. In return, they share the farm's produce.

"The call to stewardship of the land is still strong," Reist said.—*David Hiebert with Rich Preheim*

South Dakota congregation plants seeds for young farmers

FREEMAN, S.D.—Agriculture is the lifeblood of Freeman and the surrounding area. So when the price of local farmland skyrocketed to more than double the going rate in 1991, Salem Mennonite Church member and farmer Lyle Preheim spoke up.

"I realized that if we as a rural church are being impacted by forces in the countryside, why don't we take the initiative to try and reverse that impact?" he says.

So the congregation's Ag Stewardship Committee was born. It was featured in a story on rural congregations in the March issue of *Successful Farming*.

The committee sponsors annual meetings on topics such as transfer of the farm and holistic land use. But its cornerstone is a low-interest loan program. Thirty Salem families have deposited a $1,000 certificate of deposit in one of two Freeman banks. Ten young farm families in the congregation have received loans at the same interest rate that the CDs earn. The banks have each made an additional $5,000 available for loan.

CD holders don't know the names of loan recipients. No CD is tied to any one loan, so in case of default, all CDs would share the loss.

"We have no illusion that these loans will save anyone's farm," Preheim tells *Successful Farming*. "But we feel it's important for our church to make a statement about the value of young farmers to our community."

Bringing the church to Generation X

Chicago-area young people target of multicultural effort

HAMMOND, Ind.—One night last fall, after a shooting near his new home in Hammond, Rocky Kidd walked the streets with two members from rival gangs as together they talked about Jesus.

"They believe in God but don't see how they can fit in a church," Kidd says.

He hopes to provide a way. Kidd was licensed last December to plant a new Mennonite congregation, Little Calumet Christian Fellowship, geared particularly toward Generation Xers, whose brokenness has forced them to the streets.

Hammond, with a population of 800,000 but part of the Chicago metropolitan area, is "the biggest city in America nobody's ever heard of," Kidd says.

"Christ is among the broken and hurting people, and he has invited us to join in with him," says Kidd, who has a background in criminology, youth culture and multicultural inner-city ministry. "If we don't help them, who will?"

Christ is among the broken and hurting people, and he has invited us to join in with him. If we don't help them, who will?

—Rocky Kidd

Kidd's congregation is being developed with oversight from Chicago's Mennonite-affiliated Metropolitan Outreach Ministries (MOM) and with financial support from Mennonite Board of Missions and Illinois and Indiana-Michigan conferences.

Little Calumet is located in a busy, cross-cultural commercial area where African-Americans, Asians, Hispanics and whites can feel comfortable in coming together to form a multicultural congregation. It is designed to be especially accessible to young people.

"This city is known all over America as the most segregated city in America," said Alan Howe, MBM urban ministry director for Chicago, at Kidd's licensing on Dec. 13, held at Iglesia Cristiana Peniel in Chicago. "We are gathering in the name of the Lord Jesus, and we are gathering as a contradiction to this tension among all the different groups. We would not be together, but God has gathered us around the Lord Jesus, and a new thing has happened."

Howe and Juan Laureano, Iglesia Cristiana Peniel pastor and MOM director, are coaching Kidd in his church-planting work.

Kidd, raised in a Regular Baptist family in Kendallville, Ind., had known of Mennonites only as kin to the Amish. While studying at Taylor University in Upland, Ind., and searching for a church that "would marry my feelings about social practice with the gospel," Kidd says, he was pointed to the Mennonites by one of his professors, Dave Biberstein, a Missionary Church member with Swiss Mennonite roots.

MBM photo by Tom Price

The hustle and bustle of the metropolitan Chicago area is the backdrop for a church plant by Rocky Kidd (above) in Hammond, Ind. His work is being supported by Mennonite Board of Missions, Illinois Conference and Indiana-Michigan Conference and is being overseen by the Mennonite-affiliated Metropolitan Outreach Ministries of Chicago.

"I was welcomed with open arms," Kidd says, describing a meeting with Indiana-Michigan conference minister Del Glick.

Said Howe, "We believe it is God who has placed this new person in this new place."

God also placed a vision in Kidd's heart.

"God has given me a vision and a passion to pastor a small- to medium-sized multicultural Generation X/baby buster-oriented church," he says. "I grew up knowing the truth but continued to veer from the path. Yet in my brokenness, Christ accepted me. That is the reality of my life—the brokenness. Yet in my weakness, I am made strong in Christ."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

Correction: Mennonite Central Committee aid to the Balkans is bound for ethnic Albanian Kosovars who have fled Kosovo under Serbian pressure. A headline in the April 6 issue incorrectly indicated the aid recipients.

MCC, MCC U.S. chairs ready for change

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—From local structures to international relationships, the new board chairs for Mennonite Central Committee and MCC U.S. are looking to guide an era of change.

Karen Klassen Harder was elected MCC chair and Harriet Sider Bicksler as MCC U.S. chair at the organizations' annual meetings earlier this year in Abbotsford. For each woman and board, the result of change may be different, but the root causes are the same: growth and an involved constituency.

"Our constituents in Canada and the United States have a renewed interest in relief," Harder says. "Our partners overseas have new ideas about who they are and how they want to relate to MCC. CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency], which provides $3.6 million U.S. for MCC work overseas, is asking new questions, such as why do we insist on placing North Americans overseas when national local workers are available."

Then there are evolving relationships with MCC U.S., MCC Canada, Ten Thousand Villages and Mennonite World Conference.

"These changes could be seen as unsettling and threatening," Harder says. "We need to see this time as an exciting time to reaffirm and improve MCC, building on the solid, excellent legacy we built during the past 78-plus years."

Change at MCC U.S. grows from restructuring staff and regionalization. Some work, such as peace and justice, will be shifted to the organization's four regional offices.

"That will strengthen regional programs and, we hope, involve more people at the grass-roots level," Bicksler says.

That grass-roots level is another challenge for her. "I want MCC to be able to reach out to and include the ... diversity of our constituency in MCC programs and activities," she says. "I would like to see more people from our under-represented constituencies become involved in the work of MCC U.S. African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans and other racial and ethnic groups have become part of MCC's constituency. We also have many denominational groups we want to involve that are smaller and often more conservative than the 'mainline' Mennonite groups such as the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church."

Bicksler is a member of Grantham (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church and works in mental health and substance abuse services. Harder is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., and a business professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Harder is the first woman to chair the MCC board, while Bicksler is the second to lead the MCC U.S. board. Anna Juhnke was MCC U.S. board chair from 1984 to 1986.—*MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Charmayne D. Brubaker

Karen Klassen Harder (left), new Mennonite Central Committee board chair, visits with new MCC U.S. board chair Harriet Sider Bicksler during their organizations' annual meeting earlier this year.

We need to see this time as an exciting time to reaffirm and renew MCC.

—Karen Klassen Harder

COE action calls for merger of publishing houses by 2002

NEWTON, Kan.—The Commission on Education (COE), meeting March 17-20, approved a measure setting 2002 as the goal for forming one North American publishing house.

The action, which still needs approval by the board of Mennonite Publishing House, calls for developing a joint operating agreement for COE's Faith & Life Press and MPH's Herald Press. The action assumes a merger of the two operations by 2002 with activities housed in both Newton—current Faith & Life headquarters—and Scottdale, Pa.—current Herald Press headquarters.

The MPH board is expected to deal with the proposal at its October meeting.—*GCMC News Service*

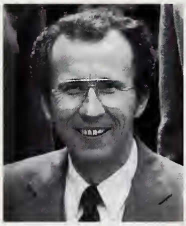
Printing for money

Photo by *Aurora* (Neb.) *News-Register*

Kerri Pankratz, a member of Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Neb., screen prints shirts at the 20th annual Nebraska Mennonite Central Committee sale March 26-27 in Aurora. The sale raised $144,965 for MCC. This year's big-dollar item was a 1956 Ford half-ton pickup, which sold at auction for $10,550. The top quilt went for $2,000.

Going global for biblical understanding

Ghana-bound professor has learned much from diversity



There is so much one can gain from fellowship and worship with people from another culture.

—Jacob Elias

ELKHART, Ind.—Taking a culturally diverse approach to the Bible is a priority for Jacob Elias.

"I have learned a lot from having students from all over the world," says Elias, professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. "The global context for church and mission is a value that I hold very important."

As part of his research for a book on Paul's teachings, Elias will teach a course on the apostle's letters at Good News Theological College and Seminary in Accra, Ghana, from April 26 to May 18. His trip is being underwritten by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), which supports the school.

Elias, who is on sabbatical, says his book will take a narrative approach to Pauline theology, tracing Paul's story, the story of Jesus, congregational stories and ultimately God's story. Elias is developing first-century case studies of congregations and comparable late 20th-century case studies, which span a variety of cultural contexts.

"I am excited about meeting people who profess the same faith and whose commitment to Christ is comparable to mine but who live in different cultures," says Elias, who has already visited Latin America as part of his research. "There is so much one can gain from fellowship and worship with people from another culture."

The necessity of a multicultural approach to the Bible became apparent to Elias while traveling in the Middle East during a previous sabbatical. "Standing at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, I saw Orthodox Jewish boys worshiping with their fathers," he says. "During a trip to Athens, I caught the cosmopolitan flavor of this cultural center in the Greco-Roman world of the first century."

Elias realized the vast cultural chasm that Paul, who also had been a Jewish boy who prayed in Jerusalem, had to overcome in order to preach in Athens and the rest of the Mediterranean.

"I recognized that I need sisters and brothers in Christ from other cultures to help me see more clearly the meaning of the gospel," Elias says.

On weekends in Ghana, he hopes to visit congregations and pastors to discuss with them Paul's letters and their churches.

Good News Theological College and Seminary provides training for lay leaders and pastors in West African independent churches.
—Minda Kauffman of MBM News Service

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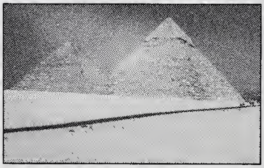

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Ministerial Leadership Services director named

NEWTON, Kan.—Kansas pastor Keith Harder has been appointed the new director of Ministerial Leadership Services (MLS) of the General Conference Mennonite Church. He will succeed John Esau, who will retire on Aug. 31 after 14 years in the position.

The MLS office's responsibilities include assisting with the placement of pastors and developing standards and guidelines for pastoral ministry.

Harder has been pastor of First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro since 1986. He has also served Fellowship of Hope Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., and taught Bible at Hesston (Kan.) College. Harder is a graduate of Tabor College, Hillsboro; has a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart; and a doctor of ministry degree from St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Mo.—*GCMC News Service*

Lesson outlines to undergo revisions

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—The International Bible Lesson Outlines, used for several Mennonite publications, will become more thematic and learner-driven rather than totally Scripture-driven.

That decision was made last month at the annual meeting of the Committee on the Uniform Series, which oversees the International Bible Lesson Outlines. Faith & Life Press and Herald Press use the outlines for *Adult Bible Study, Builde*r and *Rejoice!*

The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church are among 20 member denominations of the Committee on the Uniform Series.

Dispute leads MCC Canada to give to trust fund

WINNIPEG—In addition to paying its full power bill, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada will contribute an additional 10 percent to a trust fund to benefit Native groups affected by a northern Manitoba hydroelectrification project.

The trust fund will allow for Native groups to be reimbursed for outstanding debts owed by the government and Manitoba Hydro. MCC Canada says the government and the power company have reneged on a 1977 agreement to provide the Native groups with compensation and alternative means of livelihood in exchange for building the hydroelectrification project on Native lands.

MCC Canada originally considered diverting 10 percent of its power bill to the trust fund. But after meeting with constituent groups, it was decided to contribute to the trust fund on top of paying the full power bill. —*MCC Canada News Service*

Gaza kindergarten gets MCC assistance

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza—A Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) grant has helped create a kindergarten in a Palestinian neighborhood in Gaza. The kindergarten celebrated its grand opening earlier this year.

While the local public schools provide adequate education, parents weren't sure their children had the necessary skills to start school. Mothers do housework all day without benefit of electricity and water supplies, and most fathers commute daily to Israel, where they work as laborers. All that leaves parents little time for their children.

So MCC contributed $1,000 to help turn two rooms on private property into kindergarten classrooms. All labor and supplies were donated by neighborhood people.—*MCC News Service*

Pennsylvania credit union moves headquarters

LANCASTER, Pa.—Prompted by increasing growth in the eastern part of the state, the Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union has relocated its corporate headquarters from Scottdale to Lancaster.

The credit union was started in Scottdale in 1955 and will remain home to a full-service office. A branch office in Lancaster opened last year.

by the way ...

Six Mennonite congregations have been planted in Vietnam since last fall. —*Canadian Mennonite*

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Events

Eastern District and Franconia conferences joint meeting, April 30-May 1, Souderton, Pa.

"Renew Yourself: A Spiritual and Educational Seminar," May 10-28, Hesston (Kan.) College. Sponsored by the Hesston College Center for Bible Study and the Native Education and Training scholarship program.

Central District Conference annual meeting, June 10-12, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

North Central Conference annual meeting, June 11-13, Glen Flora, Wis.

Pacific Northwest Conference annual meeting, June 18-19, Lebanon, Ore.

Ohio Conference annual meeting, June 18-19, Hartville, Ohio.

Indiana-Michigan Conference annual meeting, June 24-26, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Pacific Southwest Conference annual meeting, June 24-26, Tucson, Ariz.

Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District conferences joint meeting, June 25-27, Kalona, Iowa.

Workers

Graber, Melvin, was commissioned March 21 as pastor of Central Heights Mennonite Church, Durham, Kan.

Janzen, Jan and Rick, began April 1 as Middle East area directors for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Winnipeg.

King, Rod, Hickory, N.C., is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in Germany as a refugee coordinator.

Metzler, Glenn, has begun a chaplaincy at Landis Homes Retirement Community, Lititz, Pa.

Miller, Karen, Cambridge, Mass., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Indianapolis as assistant manager for a Ten Thousand Villages store.

Morton, Craig and Karla, were installed March 28 as co-pastors of Emmaus Mennonite Church, Meridian, Idaho.

Nord, Andrea and Eric, La Junta, Colo., are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Honduras, working at post-hurricane relief efforts.

Power, Grant and Nancy, Pasadena, Calif., are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in the Philippines, Grant as a planning adviser and Nancy as an agriculturalist.

Shenk, Kristina and Reuben Glick, Millersburg, Ohio, are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Bolivia, Kristina as a women's promoter and Reuben as an agricultural worker.

Tyson, Warren, has begun as conference minister for Eastern District Conference. He holds the same position with Atlantic Coast Conference.

Welty, Lavon, has begun as associate conference minister for Central District Conference.

Births

Boyer, Joshua Wesley, April 3, to Dan and Vanessa (King) Boyer, Lancaster, Pa.

Butcher, Tyson Everett, April 7, to Mark and Tina (Davish) Butcher, Pennsburg, Pa.

Cartmel, Timothy Paul, April 2, to Anne (Sprunger) and Tom Cartmel, Elkhart, Ind.

Friesen, Joshua Landis, March 9, to Steve Friesen and Christine Landis, Mount Ranier, Md.

Herr, Peter James, March 24, to Elnore (Bergey) and Kenneth Herr, Morgantown, Pa.

Horst, Ashley Nicole, April 2, to Julie (Gerber) and Sheldon Horst, Columbia, Pa.

Husband, Zoe Kathryn Miller, April 5, to Corwyn Husband and Roslyn Miller Husband, South Bend, Ind.

Kirkpatrick, Elliana Shayne and Joseph Darby (twins), April 5, to Andrea and Shane Kirkpatrick, South Bend, Ind.

Kiros, Mikayla Nicole, Feb. 7, to Mikias and Theresa (Baker) Kiros, Richfield, Minn.

Kreider, Phillip Lloyd, April 1, to Ryan Kreider and Sandra Zehr-Kreider, Kirkwood, Pa.

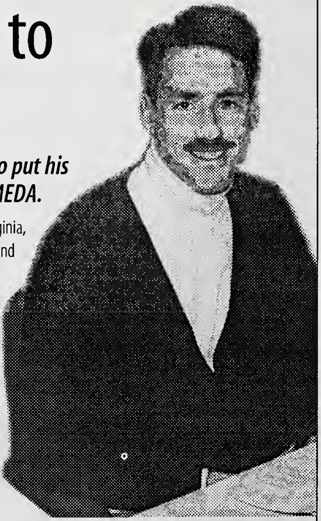
Lapp, Jordan Taylor, March 28, to Jennifer Lapp, Leola, Pa.

Metzger, Jordan Scott, March 3, to Ann (Giles) and Gary Metzger, Elmira, Ont.

Miller, Grace Elizabeth, March 5, to Robert and Tracy (Heffentrager) Miller, Mohnton, Pa.

Overman, Jeremiah Andrew, Feb. 3, to Matt and Sonya (Hostetler) Overman, Goshen, Ind.

MEDA:
Putting faith to work



When David Smucker wanted to put his faith to work, he turned to MEDA.

Smucker, a sales manager in Harrisonburg, Virginia, has a passion to help people realize their dreams and potential through the creation of small businesses. He is putting his faith to work through the Valley Microenterprise Alliance (VMA), a new MEDA-supported small business creation program for low income people in the Harrisonburg area. Through VMA he wants to help low income people find meaningful and sustaining employment.

"For me, work and faith are not disjointed," he says. "Through MEDA and VMA, I have new opportunities to help others by sharing my faith and skills."

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Peachey, Logan Michael, March 29, to Brent and Rosie (Zook) Peachey, Reedsville, Pa.
Schmidt, Abigail Ann, March 29, to Amy (Franz) and Matt Schmidt, Newton, Kan.
Shirk, Peter Hochstetler, Jan. 19, to Cheryl and Steve Hochstetler Shirk, Zaporozhye, Ukraine.
Trezevant, Charles Alton, Feb. 13, to Charlie and Sonya (Troyer) Trezevant, Tampa, Fla.
Troyer, Amy Lynn, March 31, to David and Lynn (McDonnell) Troyer, Alva, Fla.

Marriage

Keeler/Watkins-Harris: Richard Keeler, Chaguanaf, Trinidad, and Margaret Watkins-Harris, St. Joseph Village, Trinidad, March 4 at Pointe-a-Pierre, Trinidad.

Deaths

Beachy, Alvin Ray, 74, Albany, Ore., died March 28 of complications from a stroke. Survivors: children Ken, Debbi Canepa, Bryan; nine grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Albany.
Bontrager, Iris, 85, Topeka, Ind., died March 30. Spouse: Katie Ann Troyer Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Edward and Fannie Miller Bontrager (deceased). Survivor: son Neal. Funeral: April 1 at Middlebury, Ind.
Ebersole, Norman, 96, Manheim, Pa., died April 7. Spouse: Martha Miller Ebersole (deceased). Parents: Seth and Martha Stauffer Ebersole (deceased). Survivors: children Wilbur, Betty Rutt, Mildred Gehman, Martha, Lois Rettew; 14 grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Fulk, Roberta Holsinger, 78, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 19. Spouse: Howard Fulk (deceased). Funeral: March 22.
Geiser, Lester, 84, Smithville, Ohio, died March 27. Spouse: Ruth Norris Geiser. Parents: Dave and Ida Forrer Geiser (deceased). Other survivors: children Harold, Betty Buchwalter, Carol Workman, Jeanne Porter, Debbie Mast; 14 grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; four step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Gugel, Edward, 75, Wayland, Iowa, died March 27 of cancer. Parents: John and Tillie Rapp Gugel (deceased). Funeral: March 31 at Wayland.
Hartzler, Paul, 74, Roanoke, Ill., died April 3. Spouse: Ruby Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Roy and Martha Saltzman (deceased). Survivors: son Paul II; two grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Metamora (Ill.) Mennonite Church.
Hershberger, Sterling, 84, Canby, Ore., died April 3. Spouse: Florence Burkey Hershberger (deceased). Parents: Jerry and Sarah Hershberger (deceased). Survivors: children Ken, Steve, Jerry, Shirley Stauffer, Sharon Stutzman; 16 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.
Lehman, Lola Schmidt, 65, Goshen, Ind., died March 24. Spouse: David Lehman. Parents: Louis and Francis Schmidt (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Anne Crist, Margaret Nafziger, Jane Hartman, Mary Bettis, David, Joseph; 33 grandchildren. Funeral: March 29 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Long, Leslie, 85, Sterling, Ill., died March 27 of heart failure. Spouse: Wilma Shank Long. Parents: Norman and Bertha Landis Long (deceased). Other survivors: children Leonard, Vernon, Weldon, Warren; 11 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 30 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill.
McDorman, Leonard, 69, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 11. Spouse: Ruby McDorman. Parents: Austin and Sadie McDorman (deceased). Other survivors: children Bonnie, Lenny, Rhoda Huffman, Joe, Libbie Ritchie; seven grandchildren. Funeral: March 15 at Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Meyer, Leroy, 59, Wayland, Iowa, died March 24 from a farm accident. Spouse: Janie Meyer. Parents: Harold and Aldine Sutter Meyer. Other survivors: children Steve, Tim, Beth Vandermolen; three stepgrandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Wayland.
Miller, Amanda, 86, Millersburg, Ohio, died Feb. 15. Parents: Emanuel and Dena Weaver Miller (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 18 at Millersburg (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Miller, Thomas, 64, Claypool, Ind., died March 30 of heart complications. Spouse: Marietta Whitehead Miller. Parents: Amzie and Josephine Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Tom, Debra Tarner, Marcia VanLue, Kathy Johnston, Mari Leckrone; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: April 3 at Mennonite Church of Warsaw (Ind.).
Rigler, George, 95, Sterling, Ill, died March 26. Spouse (1st) Mary Ziegler Rigler (deceased); (2nd) Nora Conrad Rigler (deceased). Parents: George and Bessie Wilkinson Rigler (deceased). Memorial service: April 11 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.
Weber, Ida Benner, 97, Lititz, Pa., died March 26. Spouse: Abel Weber (deceased). Parents: David and Sarah Graybill Benner (deceased). Survivors: stepsons Lester, Richard, Elvin, John; 13 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Lititz.
Yoder, Elvira Stoltzfus, 74, Kalona, Iowa, died March 25. Spouse: Robert Yoder. Parents: John and Laura Beckler Stoltzfus (deceased). Survivors: children Marcia Yoder-Schrock, Mahlon, Stanley, Herschel, Atlee; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Kalona (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

classifieds

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., has paid positions available for ***male and female counselors***, June 20-Aug. 13, 1999. Inquire at 2610 Lynds Hill Road, Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959.

- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a ***system administrator/programmer*** (relevant experience desirable). Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., Attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** is seeking a ***resource room teacher***. Experience with a special education degree preferred. Contact Kay Predmore, interim administrator, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705.

- **World War II *conscientious* objectors:** Independent producers seek ***materials for public television documentary*** about the CO and CPS experience in WWII—home movies, photos, artwork, letters.

  Contact Paradigm Productions, 2600 Tenth St. #429, Berkeley, CA 94710; 510-843-0789; fax 510-843-0138; email lcc@paradigmproductions.org

- **Freeman Academy** is accepting applications for a ***high school social studies teacher*** with gr. 5-12 PE, computers and varsity girls and boys BB coaching. Send resume, teaching certificate and credentials to Freeman Academy, Attn. Dr. Larry Horner, P.O. Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029. Closes May 13, 1999.

- **Camp Hebron** seeks ***bookkeeper/administrative assistant***. Primary responsibility for camp financial services including accounts payable, accounts receivable and payroll. Experience with Quikbooks preferred. Must be detail oriented and able to work with a ministry team. Send resume and cover letter with salary requirements to Lanny Millette, Camp Hebron, 957 Camp Hebron Road, Halifax, PA 17032.

- **Rosthern Junior College**, a residential Mennonite high school, invites applications for ***boys' residence dean*** (full-time); part-time teaching positions in areas of ***chemistry, drama, Christian ethics***; part-time ***admissions, spiritual life coordinator***. Contact Erwin Tiessen, principal, Rosthern Junior College, Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0; 306-232-4222; fax 306-232-5250; email rjc.01@sk.sympatico.ca

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has openings for the 1999-2000 school year: ***technology education*** (cover full-year sabbatical leave); ***English*** (master's degree preferred); ***family and consumer sciences*** (.75 position); ***science*** (.60 position); ***math***; ***dean of students***.

  Contact J. David Yoder at EMHS, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4502.

- **Western Mennonite School** open positions for fall 1999: ***girls resident director*** (salaried, full-time); ***ESL, art, keyboarding and business*** (salaried, part-time teaching); ***assistant boys resident director, maintenance assistant, assistant cook*** (VS positions); ***girls volleyball coach*** (stipend).

  Contact Eric Martin, principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Upper Skippack Mennonite Church**, second oldest Mennonite church in America, cut back, pruned and ready to grow, needs experienced ***pastoral elder*** to join elder team. A heart for God and gift of leadership, strong preaching and teaching, vision to accomplish ministry through lay leadership, and compassion for the lost and broken.

  Send resume to Joel Hackman, 709 Mill Road, Telford, PA 18969; 215-256-6088.

- **Salford Mennonite Church** seeks candidates for ***youth pastor***. Salford Mennonite Church is located in Harleysville, Pa., about 30 miles north of Philadelphia. Candidates should hold strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. The youth pastor position is currently half-time, but Salford welcomes candidates seeking full-time or part-time ministry opportunities.

  Interested people may respond in writing to Youth Pastor Search Committee, Salford Mennonite Church, 480 Groff's Mill Road, Harleysville, PA 19438; 215-256-0778; email mail@salfordmc.org

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks:

Degree completion program representative for its adult degree completion program. Bachelor's degree required. Experience in promotion, marketing, advertising, public relations and strategic planning essential. Must possess strong communication skills.

Catalog librarian, full-time, 10 months, sabbatical replacement. Knowledge of and experience with MARC format, DDC, LCSH, AACR2, OCLC required. ALA accredited MLS, preferred.

Appointments June 1999. EMU seeks people who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae and three references to William Hawk, VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer

- **Hilltop Mennonite Fellowship**, Petoskey, Mich., seeks a person willing to ***pastor in a bivocational role***. Located on Lake Michigan in a year-round resort area, the community includes farming, booming building trades, modern medical facilities, good school system including a community college. We are a small congregation interested in outreach with some involvement in homeless ministry, looking for leadership in expanding our vision of healing and hope. Desired qualities include strong commitment to Anabaptist-Christian beliefs, preaching and leadership abilities, interpersonal communication skills. Some Bible training is preferred though seminary is not necessary.

Please respond to Linda Boyer, church chairperson, 5483 Evergreen Trail, Petoskey, MI 49770; 616-347-3089; email linboyer@freeway.net

- **Glencroft Retirement Community** in Glendale, Ariz., seeks a ***licensed administrator*** to lead its 225-bed health care center. Candidates should have a successful track record in large facilities, excellent communications skills, ability to lead in a team setting, and an appreciation for the mission of a church-related, not-for-profit organization.

Applicants should send their resume to Jenny Yoder, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

- **Holly Grove Christian School** is currently accepting applications for the 1999-2000 school year. We have a vacancy for a full-time secondary ***math/science teacher***. All interested parties should send resume to 7317 Mennonite Church Road, Westover, MD 21871 or call 410-957-0222 M-F 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Holly Grove Christian School does not discriminate in its employment practices based on race, color, national and ethnic origins. Our school is associated with Holly Grove Mennonite Church.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

Send resume and references to Clark Roth, director of admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Deadline May 15. For more information email clarkr@hesston.edu or phone 800-995-2757.

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has two teaching positions available beginning with the 1999-2000 school year. A certified ***special ed teacher*** in our multicategorical Learning Center is needed, and a combined ***agriculture/science*** position including responsibilities with the FFA is available. Training in horticulture, landscaping, environment and/or biological sciences and mechanics is desirable for the agriculture/science position.

Contact Richard Thomas, Lancaster Mennonite High School, 2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602; 717-299-0436; fax 717-299-0823; email thomasjr@lmhs.com

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

Moving?

Please allow six weeks for change of address.

Call 800-790-2498.

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Continuing Education events at AMBS this summer

Worship and Mission
July 16-18, 1999

Presenters:
Alan Kreider, Ph.D., and Eleanor Kreider, M.Mus., mission workers in London, England; Stuart Murray, Ph.D., consultant on evangelism in England.

Explore the relationship between worship and mission biblically and practically, historically and with a clear focus on the present. See the congregation's worship as an asset in mission.

Fee: $75, or $60 for three or more from one congregation. Register by June 1.

Preparing Pastors for a Changing Culture
July 31, 1999

Presenters:
Lois Barrett, Ph.D., Commission on Home Ministries; Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS; Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D., Fuller School of World Mission

Explore today's culture with new eyes to see how we can share the gospel and offer effective leadership with all that is changing around us.

Fee: $45, or $35 each for three or more from one congregation. Register by June 1.

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Diane Zaerr, dzaerr@ambs.edu
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Anwar and Gulbani Kanji were forced to leave their home in Uganda in 1972. A year later they arrived in the United States. The couple now owns a small specialty grocery store in Akron, Pa.

Myth: Immigrants take our jobs.

Fact: Self-employment is higher among newcomers to the United States and Canada than among U.S. and Canadian citizens. Compared to most U.S citizens, newcomers are more likely to be employed, save their earnings and start new businesses.

Myth: Immigrants take services from taxpayers.

Fact: According to the U.S. census, only 9 percent of immigrant households receive welfare. The Urban Insititute reports that immigrants use more welfare per capita than U.S. citizens. But when excluding refugees, immigrants use welfare at a rate of 2 percent, a lower rater than the 3.7 percent of U.S. citizens.

Newcomers are parents, teachers, friends, doctors, police, the local grocier or the mayor. Immigrants permeate the fabric of society. Newcomers are an integral part of our society's goals and values.

To learn more about the economic factors that influence immigrants, contact MCC U.S. and ask for **Welcoming the Newcomer,** a packet of information on immigration rights and advocacy.

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Committee

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Akron, PA 17501-0500
(717) 859-1151

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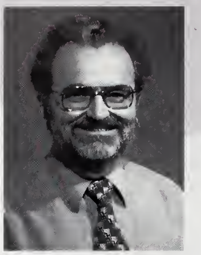

J. Lorne Peachey

Outbursts of love and good deeds

The Friday was a gloomy one, with the weather outside matching what I was feeling inside. It was, that is, until my secretary laid a card on my desk that came in the morning mail. On the cover was a purple orchid, inside a note from a 92-year-old reader.

Jacob C. Kulp, Souderton, Pa., was responding to my Easter editorial (March 23) in which I wrote about seeing new life in the first coltsfoot of spring. After describing his own joy of nature, he wrote: “So, we are brothers in Jesus … and lovers of his flowers too.”

What a gift! What love! My first response was to find someone with whom to share this joy and this love.

I thought of Jacob and his note a couple of days later while reading Hebrews 10. There, in the middle of a discussion of what the church should be doing—not wavering, holding tightly to hope, meeting together, warning each other—are these words: “Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24, NLT).

Come again? We Christians are supposed to spend time thinking up ways we can encourage each other to outbursts? That’s what the writer of the book of Hebrews says, at least as rendered by the New Living Translation.

Think how much smoother integration might go if our congregations and conferences spent time brainstorming ways to foster love and good deeds in each other.

That’s not an activity I have found high on church agendas. What with worshiping God, caring and praying for the special needs of each other and finding ways to take the good news of the gospel to the unsaved of our communities, thinking up ways we can express love in spontaneous and unpredictable ways (my definition for “outbursts”) hasn’t been something with which we’ve spent much time.

We might consider putting this higher on our lists of what we might do. More than once in recent months I’ve heard someone say that church seems to be getting so difficult and so serious. We have so much to look out for, so much to be careful of, so much to be concerned about that the joy of following Jesus seems to be getting mired down in the details of being a disciple.

Could the joy be less because we’ve lost our focus? Might the answer to our problems and difficulties be not to brainstorm solutions but to look for ways to prod each other to acts of charity?

Our world could certainly use a few more outbursts of love these days. Think how different the Balkans might be had people there concentrated on stimulating each other to love rather than worrying about territory and ethnicity. Think how North American society might be transformed if strategizing and planning for good deeds were a priority of churches. Think how much smoother and quicker integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church might go if our congregations and conferences spent time brainstorming ways to foster love and good deeds in each other.

The outcome is hard to imagine. Could we put aside our worries about territory and borders, about power and authority and about tradition and continuity to concentrate on lives of love? Not only living these ourselves but spending our time thinking up ways to encourage others to do the same? I suspect our world would be changed forever.

So would we Christians. I’ll not soon forget the morning I went to an Elkhart, Ind., restaurant for a quiet breakfast. As I was doing some work, in came the ROMEOs (Retired Old Men Eating Out), four former church leaders, all widowers, who eat breakfast together once each week. As I was about to leave the restaurant, they called me over to their table. “We’ve talked about it, and we agree that we all like *The Mennonite*,” Ross Bender said to me on behalf of himself, Virgil Gerig, Walt Massanari and Harold Yoder.

What a gift! What a blessing! My first response was to find someone with whom to share this joy and this love.

Love and good deeds. That is what Jesus brought to us. They are what we have to give others. We would do well to spend much more time thinking of ways to encourage each other to outbursts of both.—*jlp*

Correction: Anne Lamott is the author of *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith.* Her name was misspelled in the April 13 editorial.

the Mennonite

May 4, 1999

mothers
nd the acts of God

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Breaking the cycle

Steve Ratzlaff's article "Mennonites' Split Personality" concerning taxes for war purposes (April 6) was certainly timely and thought provoking. Just after I read the article, Voice of America announced that President Clinton is seeking to have $6 billion more approved for the conflict in Kosovo. Although that figure seems minor compared to the annual budget for the military, it is a significant amount of money taken from other potential programs, such as providing food aid for the world's hungry, saving Social Security or giving tax relief to the American public. It seems that the projected surplus in the national budget over the next number of years gives our government free reign to increase military spending at its whim.

Many people outside the U.S. and European context do not view the United States as the last remaining world leader but as a bully who uses force whenever someone disagrees. Is it leadership to bomb someone into signing a peace deal? Since August 1998, the United States has spent billions of dollars conducting missile and air strikes into Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo. From my view in the Asian setting, all this has achieved has been to harden views of the United States as a bully. A bully invites feelings of resentment, hatred, bitterness and ultimately revenge. The cycle of violence, therefore, continues and widens and occasionally manifests itself in terrorist activities. As Christians, should we not be the ones who break this cycle? How would the view of the United States change if we encouraged the billions spent on missiles and bombs to be spent on humanitarian and development aid instead?

Ratzlaff gives several ways to avoid paying war taxes. Until the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill becomes reality, it would appear that the only ways to ensure that one's tax dollars not go to military usage is to keep income below taxable levels or refuse to pay all taxes. The government currently will first take taxes for military purposes regardless of whether one pays the military portion or not. Thus by not paying the military portion, it appears one ultimately cuts money available for social programs rather than the military. To stay below taxable levels, one may cut actual income below the taxable level or go beyond Ratzlaff's suggestion that the military portion of income taxes be given to some organization such as Mennonite Central Committee and give all actual income above the taxable level to charitable purposes. One wonders what our Mennonite agencies could do if the latter practice was followed by the large majority of their constituencies.—*Steve Martin, address withheld*

Editor's note: The address of the author, who lives in a Central Asian country, is being withheld for security reasons.

A step away from violence

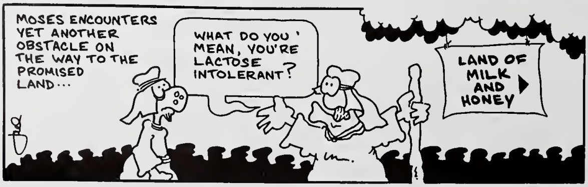
In the several days since the tragedy in Colorado, I have heard asked many times, "What can we do about this violence that is in our land?" Many commentators on the networks have noted that TV, video and movie violence certainly contribute to the episodic mass killings in our schools. Could we agree together, as peace-loving Mennonites, not to support the industry that produces violence? Could we covenant together at St. Louis, youth and adults alike, to refuse to buy, rent or view that which is violent? This could be one step in the right direction.—*A. Richard Weaver, Ephrata, Pa.*

A matter of life and death

In spite of all that has been said in recent issues of *The Mennonite* about requirements for church membership, I would welcome more discussion of Matthew 18:15-18, a key passage on the subject. Here Jesus introduces the step of regarding as an outsider ("tax collector and sinner") an individual member (not a whole congregation) who "refuses to hear the church." Of course, this is a last resort, done only after every effort to restore the person has failed. I also understand that taking this step is not based on the seriousness of a particular sin but solely on whether a member responds to the church's plea to recommit to his or her baptismal vow. In any case, a removed person is loved just as much as before but now as a sought-after outsider.

It is often argued that we have far too many beams in our own eyes to see clearly to remove

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


MOSES ENCOUNTERS YET ANOTHER OBSTACLE ON THE WAY TO THE PROMISED LAND...
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Vol. 2, No. 17, May 4, 1999

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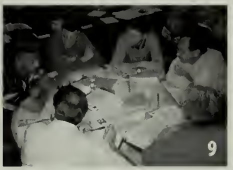

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readers say

even a dust speck from another's, much less remove a whole member from fellowship. Yet the New Testament teaches that our own repentance (removing our own beams) does make that possible—and sometimes even necessary —when life and death issues for the church are at stake. For example, if incoming members agree with us not to "prepare for war, or participate in military service" (Article 22, Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective) but later join the armed forces, they should expect to be confronted and urged to renew their commitment to evangelize and love enemies, not destroy them.—*Harvey Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Naming the problem

The trend by a young married woman to keep her maiden name, take a double last name or hyphenated last name is puzzling. While it is promoted as a benefit by the feminist movement for her personal recognition and identity, it creates some interesting problems. The first is the offense to her mother and her mother-in-law because the new name combination honors only the two fathers' family names. Second, it is offensive to the children because it is a difficult practice for them to carry on. In four generations, a child could have 16 last names. What does that do to family history, genealogy and tradition?

It appears, then, that the double/hyphenated last name is just a self-serving gesture for today's woman. Since selfishness is a basic cause of problems in relationships, does this imply that a hyphenated/double last name could be a risk for increased divorce rates? What also does this say about Mennonite women who appear to have adopted it to a much greater degree than most other Protestant groups or the secular culture at large? *—A.J. Scott, Elkhart, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Ron Flaming

Barrenness

A Mother's Day meditation on the story of Hannah in 1 Samuel 1 and 2

by Jane Hoober Peifer

In the Old Testament stories of God's people, a woman's principal function was to be a wife and, even more importantly, a mother. Having children was so high on the list of life priorities that men and women alike crossed all kinds of boundaries in order to have children. Men were permitted—even encouraged—to take a second wife or divorce the first one if she couldn't have children.

Men made arrangements in order to have children because being childless was a disgrace to men as well as to women. But women managed alternative plans as well. For example, Sarai arranged for Abram to have children by her slave, Hagar. Lot's two daughters got their father drunk, and each went to him and became pregnant "so that we may preserve offspring through our father" (Genesis 19:32).

Being able to produce children was the long and short of being a woman. It was basic to identity. A good woman was a mother. God had said up front, "Be fruitful and multiply," and God had promised Abraham and Sarah there would be lots of kids. God said, "I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is on the seashore" (Genesis 22:17).

Then, same as now, some women could have children and others couldn't. Those who couldn't bear children were called barren. The Bible says Hannah was barren.

The dictionary defines barren as that which cannot produce offspring; not producing fruit; unproductive, unprofitable; not bringing useful results; lacking appeal, interest or meaning; and dull, boring, empty, devoid. These definitions describe what Hannah was feeling in 1 Samuel 1:10-11. She called her situation misery. The Psalmist suggests that a barren woman feels homeless—not belonging (Psalm 113:9).

The story in 1 Samuel says that Hannah's husband loved her "though the Lord had closed her womb" (1:5). In this way, Hannah was blessed. Generally, barren women weren't loved like women who could produce children.

It wasn't bad enough that barren women's bodies failed them. Often their relationships failed them as well. Hannah's story shows that the rivalry between wives was hostile. Peninnah provoked Hannah severely because the Lord had closed her womb. She rubbed it in year after year when they went to offer sacrifice to the Lord.

Barrenness was the curse of death for women: death to being somebody, death to being able to participate in God's promise. And it was perfectly OK to disregard such women. No one noticed. No one cared.

Barrenness is not foreign to us. Some of us know barrenness in the sense of women and men not being able to have children. Often it is the women—and the men who love them—who decide not to attend church on Mother's Day because Christians too often focus on motherhood in the same way the ancient people did—as if motherhood is the only way to be a woman.

Barrenness is not foreign to us. We feel empty, unproductive, unprofitable, not useful, lacking appeal, interest or meaning.

But many more of us know about barrenness apart from the inability to have children. Some of us know about barrenness because there are ways our bodies, our minds, our emotions or our health have failed us and continue to fail us. We feel empty, unproductive, unprofitable, not useful, lacking appeal, interest or meaning. Some of us know the barrenness of losing a child or a spouse to death. Some of us know the barrenness of wanting to run and play but never being able to because of crippled legs. Some of us know the barrenness of having a healthy body that can run and play but with a mind that feels no play and instead lies like a heavy dark cloud over us, a cloud that won't go away. Some of us know the barrenness of opportunities in life. Nothing has added up for us. Basic nurture and care were withheld or misdirected when we were children, and now living is one hurdle after another. Some of us know the barrenness of shattered dreams—a pervasive feeling of disappointment that has changed the whole horizon of life for us. Some of us know the barrenness of wanting to learn how to read but somehow the letters just don't line up, and we feel stupid. And some of us know what Hannah experienced at the hands of the other wife. We know the ridicule—the snide jokes made at our expense, the impatience, the unkind remarks, the looks of disgust and the assumptions that say, Well, anybody can do that.

It's not unusual to feel the curse of God in

our barrenness. Why? we ask. What have I done to deserve this? Will no one take notice? Will no one listen? We are no stranger to barrenness.

In her barrenness Hannah wept and would not eat. She presented herself before the Lord. 1 Samuel 1:10-11a reads: "She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death.' "

Verse 15 says that she continued to pray, "pouring out [her] soul before the Lord"—telling God all the details of her grief. The priest Eli mistakenly thought she was drunk because of her distressed crying out to God.

If I've learned anything about prayer over the last years, I've learned that God can handle every emotion I have and that I can bring them all right to God's feet. I assumed for too many years that prayers had to be nice. I assumed that somehow God honored politeness more than honesty.

At the root of barrenness is the desire to give birth. All of us are created with this propensity to give and nurture life. We long to be included in God's processes of giving birth to new things—be it babies or just life in general. We also long just to be named, remembered, to matter, be noticed and valued.

Hannah took her distress—the pain and anxiety of her barrenness and the ridicule of one who irritated her deliberately year after year—right to the feet of God and laid it out. She cried and prayed until there was no more crying or praying left. The "I don't know what else to do" cry is the cry of faith that assumes someone is listening.

Following Hannah's prayer, we read in verse 18 that she went to her quarters, ate and drank with her husband, "and her countenance was sad no longer." God "re-membered" her, put her back together. In her barrenness, when she was a nobody, an unproductive member of the society, one who couldn't do what God commanded and therefore disregarded as a person of value, God took notice of Hannah.

The Hebrew word here for remembered is the same one used in Exodus 2:24, where God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God remembered the people and made things right again. Isn't that what we need when we experience barren places in our lives? More than anything we want to be remembered—to be carried and healed in the pain. Marjorie Proctoer-Smith has written, "Great suffering cannot be redeemed, but it can be remembered, and such remembering leads away from despair."

That seems to be what happened for Hannah. Her heartfelt prayer was the midwife that delivered her from paralyzing sadness and despair.

And yes, in due time, Hannah conceived a son—a special son named Samuel. And she kept her promise and dedicated her son to God.

But to be honest, I wish she hadn't conceived, because too often this story has been used on Mother's Day to herald the wonders of motherhood, and people go home harboring the formula that "barrenness + prayer = baby." In reality we know that isn't always the case. Barren women and men all through history have cried out to God and remained barren.

The miracle of this story is, first of all, that God took notice of Hannah when few others did. Second is the change, the renewed life in Hannah before she became pregnant. Hannah's prayer turned to praise. Hannah returned to the Lord with great joy and praise, and 1 Samuel 2 records her prayer:

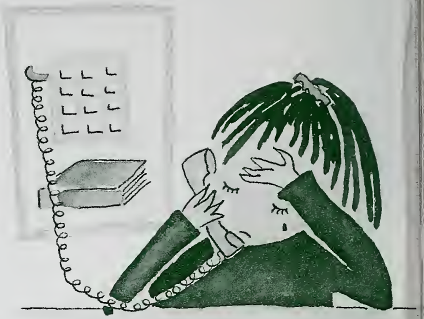
"There is no Holy One like the Lord,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.
Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed. …
The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn. …
The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low, he also exalts.
He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
to make them sit with princes
And inherit a seat of honor" (vv. 2-8a).

These words come from the heart of someone who has been noticed by God. Hannah continues: "He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, … for not by might does one prevail" (v. 9). God took notice of Hannah and renewed her life. May Hannah's words be ours—both her words of lament and her words of praise.

I assumed for too many years that prayers had to be nice. I assumed that somehow God honored politeness more than honesty.

Jane Hoober Peifer is co-pastor at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., and the mother of two young adults.

The prodigal

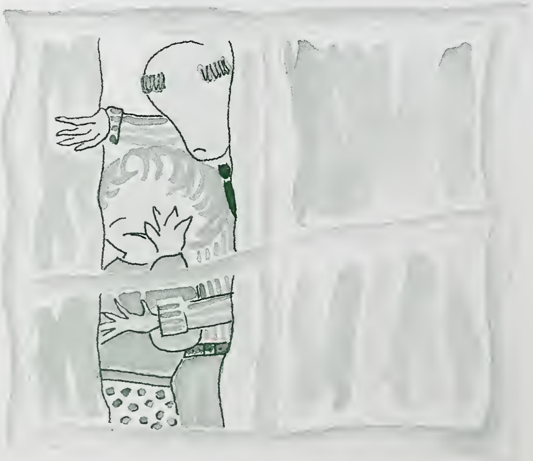


Separation

by Shirley Bustos

You wouldn't have guessed
that any emotion was exchanged
when she wailed out the door,
firmly closing it behind her, while stooping
to retrieve the overstuffed suitcases.
It would take close scrutiny
to see moist eyes peering through
parted curtains as they watch
the small gray car with rust
around the right front door
heading north for I-85.
"All we can do is pray," he reassures.
Anguish soaks into the corner of the apron
raised to her eyes.

Lowering windows
allows the rush of wind
to ease the suffocating feeling
permeating the car's interior.
An intense, burning heat
threatens to scorch
the soul's interior.
Flames of uncertainty
are defiantly quenched
by flowing images of adventure's call
to an unknown place
that has strangely beckoned
for many months.
A quick acceleration
lifts strands of hair
to stretch and whip across
a face devoid of emotion.



Three years is a long time
to live in a city
that never made you feel welcome.
Each day's monotonous existence
moves you to a lower coil
on the downward spiral of defeat.
You don't have to lose a whole lot
to feel stripped bare as a leafless tree
that bends to a relentless, driving wind.

The pay phone is located
on the far wall of the dimly lit bar.
Hollow eyes search for connection
in the faces of rowdy strangers.
Straining ears, hungry for conversation,
sift through jumbled chatter.
You wish for someone
to call you by name.
The young man
mouthing soundless words
into the phone,
finally hangs up the receiver
and staggers back to his table
for more laughter and drinks.

Fumbling for change,
you don't want to
face the humiliation;
the "I told you so" that you deserve.
Glancing into the mirror, which hangs
slightly off center by the phone,
you wonder if they would recognize
the gaunt remains of the one
they used to call daughter.
An unsteady hand
lifts the receiver.
No one but the operator
will hear the catch in your voice
as you whisper,
"I need to make a collect call to ..."

Return

"She's coming home!"
He hardly has time to place
the plastic lunch pail
on the kitchen table
before she trips over words
in excited frenzy.
Details are sketchy
but each word rings with hope.
"Any time now" is the
most specific word
that has been uttered
in three years.

It's unusual for the house
to smell of lemon furniture polish
on Wednesday, and the Saturday smell
of freshly baked bread
adds to further disorientation.
The starched curtains seem a bit limp
from being parted too many times.
The car that finally pulls into the driveway
stops with a convulsive jerk.
There are more rust spots,
and they don't remember
the muffler being so noisy.

The phrases you rehearsed endlessly,
hoping to ease the anticipated awkwardness,
are suddenly replaced
by spontaneous embracing.
Words don't make much sense
when everyone talks at once,
but let your tired mind focus
on the melting eyes
that you have missed so profoundly,
and you will hear them say,
"Welcome home!"

Shirley Bustos lives in Valparaiso, Ind.

Illustrations by Ingrid Hess

Boards buy time on membership issue

Final decision planned for sometime after St. Louis 99

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—St. Louis 99 delegates will not vote in July on a solution to the contentious issue of membership in the new Mennonite Church U.S., according to the batch of integration resolutions that will come to the assemblies. As a result, the U.S. body faces at least two more years of grappling with polity and homosexuality issues.

After scrapping several other proposals, U.S. members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) general boards are sending without endorsement the Membership Committee's final report to the St. Louis delegates for "first reading and study." Further action would then be determined by the top board of the new U.S. church. The earliest delegates could make any decision would be at the first post-St. Louis assembly, planned for 2001.

> **I don't want to keep the process from moving forward, but I want North Central Conference to come along too.**
>
> *—Galen Kauffman*

The action on the membership guidelines is one of eight St. Louis 99 integration resolutions from the GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) general boards, which signed off on the measures during joint meetings April 22-24 in South Bend. Other resolutions call for releasing current Canadian GC and MC members to the new Mennonite Church Canada and creating an Executive Board to oversee both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church in the United States until they can be incorporated into a single delegate body (see related stories, pp. 9-10).

> **We're afraid to take a stand. I really think we need to move forward on this.**
>
> *—Duane Oswald*

The membership guidelines, revised following the March membership consultation, propose that all current GC, MC and CMC congregations automatically become members of either the new Mennonite Church U.S. or Mennonite Church Canada; that congregations set the criteria for accepting individuals; and that area conferences set the criteria for accepting congregations.

While the guidelines affirm the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the Purdue and Saskatoon statements against homosexual genital activity, several board members issued calls for something stronger. Ralph Lehman, Franklin Conference representative to the MC General Board, said members of his conference "want to know where we stand, if we adhere to the confession of faith. If we do, they want to hear it again."

But GC General Board member Lee Delp called the membership guidelines "firm in our convictions and gentle in our relationships."

"If we could … allow this approach where conferences truly have discretion over membership," he said, "then the real issue is how we respect each other."

How to do that, however, was highlighted as a point needing clarification: What sort of relationship can there be between conferences which take differing approaches to congregational membership? "If you can agree on that hinge point, you can do a lot of things in St. Louis," said Jim Schrag, GC general secretary.

Until such agreements can be reached, most board members choose to continue with caution. "I don't want to keep the process from moving forward, but I want North Central Conference to come along too," said Galen Kauffman, the conference's MC board representative.

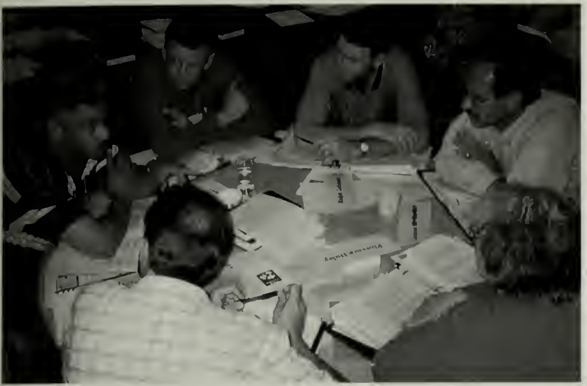
But Duane Oswald, Pacific Southwest Conference MC board representative, chided the boards for being too cautious. "We're afraid to take a stand," he said. "I really think we need to move forward on this."

Meanwhile, a caucus of CMC board members and Canadian members of the GC and MC boards at South Bend approved recommending the membership guidelines to delegates for the new Mennonite Church Canada. The two country bodies want identical guidelines, but the ramifications of two different resolutions are unknown.

"Canada may need to consider something a little different than what we agreed on," said Gary Janzen, a Canadian on the GC board.

GC board member Dennis Koehn said, "I think it's very useful for one part of the church to move ahead … and for us in the U.S. to learn from that experience."

While the U.S. church could have agreed on the guidelines in principle, the guidelines could not have legally taken effect until at least 2001. Carol Suter, a lawyer who has been researching the church's incorporation, reported there was not enough time before St. Louis to legally create a new delegate body. So both the U.S. GC and MC delegate bodies—along with their membership criteria—will continue to exist at least until the next delegate assembly when action can be taken.—*Rich Preheim*



GCMC News Service photo by Dave Linscheid

Mennonite Church General Board member Ramon Bermudez (left) makes a point at a table discussion during the April 22-24 meeting of the MC, General Conference Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada general boards in South Bend, Ind. Also at the table are (clockwise from left): John Cornies of the CMC board, Ralph Lehman of the MC board, Jim Harder of the GC board, Florence Duley of the MC board and John Murray, Integration Committee co-chair.

General boards send resolutions to delegates for creation of new U.S. and Canadian bodies

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—When the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) gathered April 22-24, preparing for the new meant out with the old—themselves.

The meeting, held at South Bend's Kern Road Mennonite Church, was the last scheduled for the three boards as they approved eight resolutions for action by GC, MC and CMC delegates at St. Louis 99 to realign the three church bodies into parallel U.S. and Canadian structures. As a result, the GC, MC and CMC boards will cease upon adoption of the resolutions at the July convention.

According to the proposals for the delegates, Canadian GC and MC members will voluntarily withdraw from the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church to form the new Mennonite Church Canada. Incorporation of the new body could come as early as the end of 1999.

The U.S. body, however, may not be incorporated for another two years. Until it is, the U.S. GC and MC delegate bodies will remain, minus the Canadians. In place of the current GC and MC general boards, delegates will be asked to create one new board—called the Executive Board—to oversee the church in the United States (see story, right).

If accepted by the delegates, guiding the development of the U.S. body during the next two years will be a transformation plan. The 29-page document addresses structures and governance, denominational vision, area conference relationships, congregational input, partnership initiatives with the Canadian church, finances, anti-racism efforts, program boards, staffing and more. Costs related to the transformation project are estimated to be $452,500 per year. Funding possibilities include private contributions, program board contributions and reserve funds.

The joint executive committee of the GC, MC and CMC general boards have called GC general secretary Jim Schrag to direct the transformation project and MC general secretary George Stoltzfus to be the first general secretary of the new U.S. Executive Board.

Other integration resolutions to come before the St. Louis delegates include authorizing the executive committees of the U.S. Executive Board and the Canadian General Board to meet at least annually to develop partnerships between the two country bodies. Such partnerships, according to a report from the Integration Committee, could include conventions, publishing and missions.

Actions on the resolutions will be taken in joint delegate sessions and in separate U.S. and Canadian caucuses at St. Louis.—*Rich Preheim*

U.S. Executive Board nominees announced

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—The slate of 15 nominees for the new Mennonite Church U.S. Executive Board was announced during the joint general boards' meeting in South Bend April 22-24. The slate will be acted on at St. Louis 99. Nominees are: Don Barnhill, Walnut Hill, Fla.; Cleon Claassen, Moses Lake, Wash.; R. Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.; Leslie Francisco III, Hampton, Va.; Susan Gingerich, Goshen, Ind.; Pat Hershberger, Woodburn, Ore.; Harold Miller, Corning, N.Y.; Shoua Moua, Arvada, Colo.; Ruth Naylor, Bluffton, Ohio; Jane Peifer, Harrisonburg, Va.; Edwin Rempel, Colorado Springs, Colo.; Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower, Fresno, Calif.; Norma Wiens, Newton, Kan.; and Diane Zaerr, Elkhart, Ind.

Dwindling reserves hamper COM work

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—First the good news: the Commission on Overseas Mission is experiencing little turnover in its mission workers. Now the bad news: More workers staying on the mission field means COM cannot afford to send new workers. In fact, for the first time in recent memory, COM did not send any new workers this spring.

The primary culprit is COM's nearly depleted unrestricted cash reserves, executive secretary Ron Flaming told the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) General Board during its April 22-24 meeting in South Bend.

At the board's direction as it anticipated integration, COM has been using up its reserves to expand its program. COM had nearly $1.18 million in reserves in 1996. But after taking out about $500,000 to meet 1999 expenses, only $166,000 will be left.

At the same time, COM has seen its share of the GC unified budget reduced from 58 percent to 55.5 percent.

"It's something I inherited," said Flaming, who became executive secretary last year, "and we're trying to find our way out of a very difficult situation."

The GC General Board came up with a two-pronged response for the next two years: trim the budget where possible while raising extra funds for COM. "We don't want to take the harshest alternative, which is taking people back from the [mission] field," said Ted Stuckey, GC treasurer.

Income in 1999 is expected to be nearly $2.5 million, $568,000 short of expenses. COM financially supports 81 overseas workers.

The situation is expected to alleviate some in the next two to three years for COM as more current workers are expected to conclude their assignments. COM has historically adjusted for budget shortfalls by not replacing terminating workers. But that has not been possible given the number of current workers choosing to remain in their assignments.

Also in several years, integration of the GC and Mennonite Church mission programs will be further along, affecting funding practices.

The GC General Board also approved reestablishing a Committee on the Ministry. The committee, a resource reference group for the Ministerial Leadership Office, had been discontinued two years ago with the formation of an Interim Ministerial Leadership Committee as part of the integration process. But GC officials have seen a need for a stronger group to help address GC ministerial issues until a permanent integrated ministerial office is formed.
—*Rich Preheim*

Bluffton students experience slavery

Undergraduate and graduate students at Bluffton (Ohio) College caught a firsthand glimpse of fugitive slave life during an April 16-17 workshop.

The workshop, titled "Slavery Narratives and Novels," investigated the relationship between American slavery narratives, autobiographies of escaped slaves and 20th-century novels. Students discussed the authenticity of the accounts, themes and language.

In a re-enactment of plantation escapes, workshop participants spent one afternoon playing the roles of fugitive slaves, patrollers, bounty hunters, underground railroad conductors and an abolitionist preacher.

Bluffton offers such workshops several times a year as part of its master of arts in education program. Undergraduate education students are also invited to participate.—*Lois Wetherill*

Racial/ethnic groups get MC board support for staffing in integrated U.S. church

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—The Mennonite Church (MC) General Board is encouraging the leadership of the integrated U.S. church to support financially efforts to provide staff members for racial/ethnic groups who want it.

The measure grew out of a request from the African-American Mennonite Association for funding for a full-time staff member. Some board members expressed concern about taking such an action at their last meeting before the proposed creation of new U.S. and Canadian boards this summer.

"We sense there is strong support for [this] proposal ... yet reluctance to do this when the board has not authority after this meeting," said board member Joe Longacher.

But AAMA chair Leslie Francisco III said the time is now. "We need the support of the existing structure because the new [U.S.] board won't understand what the [MC racial/ethnic] groups are all about," he said.

AAMA is the only group which does not have an organized counterpart in the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The MC General Board expanded AAMA's request and directed the Mennonite Church U.S. Executive Board "to engage in a strategic plan which supports the efforts of the [racial/ethnic] groups to develop staffing patterns for effective ministry and growth in the churches."

In other business, the board heard a plea on behalf of the three Native Mennonite oganizations in North America to reconsider the proposed two-country structure of the integrated church. "Our organizations cross the 49th parallel," said Don Barnhill, United Native Ministries' representative to the MC General Board.

Also signing the statement were the Mennonite Indian Leaders Council of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

The MC General Board also heard that the board ended the last fiscal year with a surplus of $13,253.—*J. Lorne Peachey*

MCC photo by Kathi Zellweger

Lentils for lunch

Preschool children in Wonsan City, North Korea, eat lunch made from Mennonite Central Committee-donated lentils. MCC purchased in Asia $100,000 worth of lentils, which were then shipped to North Korea, which has been suffering from a long-term food shortage. The shipment provided a month of lentils for 34,000 nursery school children. The country's food supply is again depleted as North Koreans wait for this year's harvest.

Healing and hope for West Africa

MBM-supported peacemaker works for reconciliation

ELKHART, Ind.—An 8-year-old child sits trembling in an orange tree. Nearby, soldiers seal the exits to his house and set it ablaze. His mother, father, grandmother and siblings are burned alive.

A young pastor freezes midsentence during his sermon when a boy enters his church. The pastor recognizes him as the soldier who molested his wife in front of his children and then ordered the pastor killed. The pastor managed to escape death, but his fear and anger remain.

Chilling stories such as these are part of the legacy of Liberia's 7-year civil war, which ended two years ago. Some 200,000 of the 2.5 million people in Liberia were killed; 800,000 people fled the country as refugees, and more than 1 million were displaced within the country.

Into this atmosphere of constant conflict, Samuel Gbaydee Doe struggles to bring healing, reconciliation and hope. He has introduced peer mediation and conflict management programs in Liberian schools to transform the conflict between students who fought as soldiers for opposing factions during the war. Doe also conducts mediation training and conflict transformation workshops for community leaders.

Doe graduated from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., in 1997 with a master's degreee in conflict resolution. He undertook the study, supported by EMU, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee, when his organization, Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL), sought MBM's assistance in healing the psychological wounds inflicted during the civil war.

"When the civil war began, which devastated every fabric of Liberian society, CHAL saw the need to address a new health problem, which was not pathological but psychospiritual and psychosocial," Doe says. "The immensity of the problem paralyzed them, and they turned to MBM for help."

But Liberia is not the only country in West Africa torn by internal strife and violence.

"The stories of Liberia are also heard in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and every other corner of this subregion," Doe says. "Some of these stories are not heard because the violence that creates them is not at the proportion that usually attracts international attention, but such invisibility even adds to the pain."

Doe, who is supported by MBM, and peacemakers from seven other West African nations last September conceived the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding. Doe was nominated to head the secretariat for the first two years of the program and in December moved to Accra, Ghana, where WANEP is based. WANEP began operation in January, and Doe has spent the past three months researching where and how WANEP is needed.—*Minda Kauffman of MBM News Service*

S.D. church honored for MVS work

Sermon on the Mount Mennonite Church in Sioux Falls, S.D., has received the 1998 Community Service Award from Lutheran Social Services of Sioux Falls.

The congregation sponsors a 2-year-old Mennonite Voluntary Service unit. The three current unit members—Cari Carter, Tara Renock and Eileen Rolon—all work with Lutheran Social Services, which includes a refugee and immigration program, resettlement services, job training and placement, English language classes and child care.—*GCMC and MBM news services*

by the way ...

While 65 percent of all new businesses fail, less than 5 percent of new Amish businesses fail.—*Calvary Messenger*

Colombian workers, agencies threatened

BOGOTA, Colombia—Saying, "We are thinking of placing a bomb," an anonymous phone caller on April 7 urged two workers with Colombian Mennonite peace and justice agencies to curb their efforts.

The phone call of unknown origin singled out Ricardo Esquivia and Yezid Beltran. Esquivia works with Justapaz, the peace agency of the Colombian Mennonite Church, and Beltran works with MENCOLDES, a development agency affiliated with the Colombian Mennonite Church and the Colombian Mennonite Brethren Church. The phone call was placed to the Justapaz office in Bogotá.

Both Justapaz and MENCOLDES have been active in peace and justice efforts in the country, which has endured a decades-long guerrilla war.—*MWC News Service*

Peace and justice committee sets goals

LOMBARD, Ill.—Mediation training for conference leaders, more resources on racial/ethnic diversity and addressing issues such as euthanasia and economic justice are the next goals for the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, members decided at their recent biennial meeting at Lombard Mennonite Peace Center.

The committee also reviewed plans for Second Mile, a new congregational peace study process; met with staff members from Christian Peacemaker Teams; and conducted phone interviews with pastors about peace and justice concerns.—*GCMC and MC news services*

Hesston College to hold May 9 commencement

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College will award degrees to 165 students at its 89th commencement exercises on May 9. The guest speaker will be J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

May 8 will feature a pinning ceremony for nursing graduates, commissioning service for pastoral ministries graduates, a concert by the college's Bel Canto Singers and a performance of the drama *All My Sons.*

EMU academic dean resigns position

HARRISONBURG, Va.—William J. Hawk stepped down April 30 as vice president and academic dean at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg. He will remain at the school as professor of philosophy, beginning in August.

"I am disappointed that our styles of working toward achieving university goals were not more compatible," says president Joseph L. Lapp.

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Births

Beck, Devin, March 7, 1997, received for adoption March 2, 1999, by Gary and Pat (Kosinski) Beck, Archbold, Ohio.

Begly, Zachariah Dubuisson, April 14, to Leonide (Dubuisson) and Peter Begly, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Blough, Kelly Nichole, March 19, to Angela (Troyer) and Chris Blough, Middlebury, Ind.

Campbell, Emma Lauren, April 1, to Bob and Janelle (Arnett) Campbell, Kansas City, Kan.

Clemmer, Damon Lee, April 12, to Kyle and Rebecca Clemmer, Souderton, Pa.

Martin, Ian Roth, March 10, to Jeff and Kristina (Roth) Martin, Lancaster, Pa.

Miller, Taylor Janae, March 19, to Darrin and Julie (Roth) Miller, Sarasota, Fla.

Moyer, Emily Nicole, April 14, to Camille (Hinkle) and Joshua Quinn Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.

Moyer, Rachel Lynn, April 14, to Doug and Glenda (Halteman) Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Newcomer, Gage Franklin, April 13, to Grant and Michele (Hochstetler) Newcomer, Shipshewana, Ind.

Richer, Sierra Ross, April 9, to Jane and Jerrell Richer, Ukiah, Calif.

Rittenhouse, Sarah Elizabeth, April 14, to Dayle and Kathy Rittenhouse, Souderton, Pa.

Short, Cameron Andrew, Feb. 21, to Stan and Suzanne (Bliss) Short, Archbold, Ohio.

Snyder, Kaylynn Irene, March 9, to Dean and Kim (Shaffer) Snyder, Sarasota, Fla.

Weaver, Alec Jamie, April 1, to Justin and Lyz (Witzky) Weaver, Goshen, Ind.

Weaver, Lydia Faith, April 6, to Chrisandra (McCulloh) and Michael Weaver, Christiana, Pa.

Marriages

Bartel/Simoneau: Dwayne Bartel, Lenexa, Kan., and Candice Simoneau, Overland Park, Kan., March 20 at Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.

Dozier/Otto: Rand Dozier and Jennifer Otto, Kokomo, Ind., March 27 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo.

Hackman/Wolf: Jim Hackman, Souderton, Pa., and Laurie Wolf, Harleysville, Pa., April 10 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

LeSage/Scott: Caroline LeSage, Langdon, N.D., and Kevin Scott, Starkweather, N.D., April 10 at Swiss Mennonite Church, Alsen, N.D.

Miller/Mullett: Megan Miller, Sarasota, Fla., and Brad Mullett, Sarasota, April 10 at Bay Shore (Fla.) Mennonite Church.

Rufenacht/Short: Willard Rufenacht, Wauseon, Ohio, and Evelyn Short, Wauseon, March 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Deaths

Alderfer, Elizabeth, 83, Hatfield, Pa., died March 9. Spouse: John Alderfer. Parents: Joseph and Elizabeth (Ruth) Hange (deceased). Other survivors: children Sylvia Derstine, Phyllis Heckler, Betsy, Rose Gehman Morton, Murrey, Brian, John; 21 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Bechler, Ida, 93, Sarasota, Fla., died March 24. Spouse: Albert Bechler (deceased). Survivors: son Albert Jr.; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Beck, Ronald, 58, Archbold, Ohio, died March 25 of a heart attack. Spouse: Carol Kauffman Beck. Parents: Dale (deceased) and Meredith Beck. Other survivors: daughter Lori Coressel; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 29 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Graber, Kathryn Rohn, 96, Fargo, N.D., died April 3. Spouse: Paul Graber (deceased). Parents: Peter and Katherine Rohn (deceased). Survivors: children Howard, Richard, Harold, Norman; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Swiss Mennonite Church, Alsen, N.D.

Hege, John Allen, 46, Lancaster, Pa., died April 5. Parents: Nathan and Arlene Landis Hege. Funeral: April 10 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Heuvel, Steven, 33, Albany, Ore., died March 29 of complications from pneumonia. Spouse: Liza Heuvel. Parents: Harold and Dolores Heuvel. Funeral: April 5 at Albany.

Lapp, Arthur, 87, Harleysville, Pa., died April 3. Spouse: Lizzie Mae Alderfer Lapp. Other survivors: children Arlin, Harley; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

McElmurry, Elsie McGregor, 88, Hesston, Kan., died April 3. Spouse: Webster McElmurry (deceased). Parents: George Edwin and Mary Turner McGregor (deceased). Survivors: children Wilma Hamner, Argie, Leon, Cora Belle Shenk, Patricia Murphy, Claudia Miller, Terry; 15 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: April 12 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Miller, Evelyn Esch, 85, Goshen, Ind., died March 16. Spouse: (1st) David Esch (deceased); (2nd) Harold Miller. Parents: John and Grace Plank Emmert (deceased). Other survivors: children Elinor Surgener, Ora Miranda, Karen Patrick, Carl, Thomas; stepchildren Margaretha Brubacher, Genevive Kehr, Eva Burroway, Daniel; 14 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; 24 stepgrandchildren; 28 stepgreat-grandchildren; four stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 20 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Miller, Gretchen Walters, 78, Sun City, Ariz., died March 19. Spouse: Lloyd Miller. Parents: Alvin and Lois Walters (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Lois Kauffman, Margaret Nisly, Nadine Wenger; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 24 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Mumaw, Mary, 81, Sarasota, Fla., died April 5 of heart complications. Spouse: Harvey Mumaw. Other survivors: children Kay Schlabach, Kathy Gebbee; six grandchildren. Memorial service: April 7 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Reichenbach, David, 80, Columbus Grove, Ohio, died March 20. Spouse: Anna Schumacher Reichenbach. Other survivors: children Randall, Douglas, Trina, Lisa; seven grandchildren. Funeral: March 23 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Rohrer, Lloyd, 72, Lancaster, Pa., died April 1. Parents: Daniel and Ada Hollinger Rohrer (deceased). Funeral: April 5 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Short, Grace, 90, Wauseon, Ohio, died March 12. Spouse: Harold Short (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Anna Frey (deceased). Survivors: children Merrill, Everett, Arnold, Geraldine Cooper, Ernestine Lehman, Brenda Shelby, Roslyn; 16 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Troyer, Barbara, 80, Goshen, Ind., died March 17. Parents: Eli and Rebecca Good Troyer (deceased). Funeral: March 21 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Troyer, Perry, 78, Kokomo, Ind., died March 18. Spouse: Nora Bontrager Troyer. Parents: Noah and Mary Schlabach Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Cecil, Delores, Sheila; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 22 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo.

Wall, Alma Kroeker, 77, Henderson, Neb., died April 1 of cancer. Spouse: Aaron Wall (deceased). Parents: Frank and Anna Toews Kroeker (deceased). Survivors: children Elmer, Jerry, Homer, Lorrain Nielsen, Dale; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Zook, Ruby Martin, 90, Goshen, Ind., died March 27. Spouse: Ira Zook (deceased). Parents: Ben and Ida Kauffman Martin (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Vera Schmucker, Ira Jr.; four stepgrandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

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- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** is seeking a ***resource room teacher***. Experience with a special education degree preferred. Contact Kay Predmore, interim administrator, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, accredited K-8, Lancaster, Pa., is seeking teacher applicants for full-time positions: ***middle school science, middle school language arts, part-time fourth- and fifth-grade teachers*** beginning August 1999. Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- **Freeman Academy** is accepting applications for a ***high school social studies teacher*** with gr. 5-12 PE, computers and varsity girls and boys BB coaching. Send resume, teaching certificate and credentials to Freeman Academy, Attn. Dr. Larry Horner, P.O. Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029. Closes May 13, 1999.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Richmond, Va., seeks ***director***, church-sponsored 10-week neighborhood recreation program for ages 5-11 beginning June 7. Send resume ASAP to 2350 Staples Mill Rd., Richmond, VA 23230, or phone Rev. Wayne Speigle, 804-359-1340. Deadline May 11.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, a K-8 accredited school with 460 students located in suburban Lancaster, Pa., seeks applicants for ***early childhood and elementary education*** positions for the 1999-2000 school year.

  Send resume to Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576.

- **Hartville Mennonite Church**, Hartville, Ohio, seeks ***music minister***. Quarter-time position responsibilities include providing leadership of music activities to children through adults, including both contemporary and traditional styles.

  Please send resume to Search Committee Chair, 1470 Smith Kramer St. NE, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **Hesston College** seeks two voluntary service people. Openings available in ***maintenance and food service*** for two individuals or a couple. Opportunity to participate in campus environment. Desired commitment: 9 months to one year at 3/4- to full-time. Available August 1.

  Contact Nelson Kilmer, director of finance, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8219; email nelsonk@hesston.edu

- **Western Mennonite School** open positions for fall 1999: ***girls resident director*** (salaried, full-time); ***ESL, art, keyboarding and business*** (salaried, part-time teaching); ***assistant boys resident director, maintenance assistant, assistant cook*** (VS positions); ***girls volleyball coach*** (stipend).

  Contact Eric Martin, principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

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- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

  Send resume and references to Clark Roth, director of admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Deadline May 15. For more information email clarkr@hesston.edu or phone 800-995-2757.

- **Mennonite Board of Missions** (MBM) is seeking a short-term ***mission coordinator*** to provide vision and leadership for the Service Adventure program. Qualifications include passion for mission among youth and young adults, knowledge and understanding of North American young adult culture, sensitivity to local vision for mission, ability to relate to people with differing theologies and cultures. At least five years experience, preferably in mission/service is required. People from under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of interest along with resume to Rachel L. Stoltzfus, MBM, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515; 219-294-7523; email rachells@MBM.org

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for the position of ***admissions counselor*** to begin July 12, 1999. Primary duties include representing the college to prospective students and their parents, coordinating campus visitation, telecounseling and recruitment volunteer programs. Qualifications for this full-time position include a commitment to Goshen College's mission, writing and speaking skills, willingness to travel, a bachelor's degree and, preferably, related experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

  Send letter of application and resume, including three letters of reference, to David Janzen, director of human resources, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7507; fax 219-535-7660; email davidpj@goshen.edu. Applications are encouraged through the Goshen College web site at http://www.goshen.edu. Application deadline: May 20, 1999, or until the position is filled. Members of under-represented groups and women are encouraged to apply.

- **World War II *conscientious objectors*:** Independent producers seek ***materials for public television documentary*** about the CO and CPS experience in WWII—home movies, photos, artwork, letters.

  Contact Paradigm Productions, 2600 Tenth St. #429, Berkeley, CA 94710; 510-843-0789; fax 510-843-0138; email lcc@paradigmproductions.org

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Why I'm working at integration

by Malinda Elizabeth Berry

Sure, integration has been a hard road, and I continue to learn about its evolution. I've cried, I've sighed and I've felt depressed about the depth of conflict brought to the surface through the many stages of integration.

Then I think about two truths in my life: the church is my home, and the church is my resting place. That's why I'm doing this. Even in my most cynical, sarcastic or silly moments, I must affirm that I'm doing this because I love God and God loves me. That means we are both resolved never to turn our backs on each other. God is helping me find the path God's chosen for me because I've decided to be in service to Yahweh, who is my Creator, my Wisdom, my Word, my Vision.

Voices that call our names: I started working at integration when my conference called on me to be a steward of the Mennonite Church. My elders have had strong vision for a new expression of Christian unity among General Conference Mennonite Church members and Mennonite Church members, and I commit myself to that vision. I'm working at integration because, like young Samuel, I've said, "Yes, Yahweh, you called, and I am listening." Consequently, I'm ready to preach from the mountain top: "Hey world, being Mennonite is a most excellent thing."

Throughout my wider church experiences I've often found myself feeling like an oddball. I love going to meetings. I love eating in dining halls with people who are my parents' peers. On more than one occasion I've thought, This is not normal. I'm 25 years old and I have all this energy for relating to the structural life of the church. I'm still trying to sort out all the hats and glasses I wear in this process.

As a multiracial seminary student under age 30 from Goshen, Ind., who went to a Mennonite high school and college, lived in Washington for awhile and participated in the Ministry Inquiry Program in Atlanta, I have many questions to ask and ideas to sort out. But the bottom line for me is, Am I being faithful?

Voices that challenge us: I continue to work at integration because through this work I've become better acquainted with parts of the church I'd never met before. God is using interpersonal relationships to disarm me. My judgments and hostilities have become clearer, and I rejoice in my greater self-awareness as I repent for my shortcomings.

I was invited to be part of the general board largely because I'm a young adult. Most of my peers, if they feel connected to the church at all, are not interested in the structural life of the church. If we are "in the church," we may feel energized about our congregations or small groups, but for the most part we young adults think we have little reason to care about the larger church.

Integration is about much more than going to meetings. It means talking with my sister and her friends about how they experience church. It's about making myself available to my peers so that I can be their advocate for future generations of leadership as the new church body takes shape.

Voices that take or give life: The face of the church is changing in many ways. Mennonites are changing. Our identity is not singular but plural, including various kinds of people.

We've been wading through a time of deep division. I've encountered many people intent on making the crooked straight and the rough places plain because they sense we are in a wasteland of despair, blasphemy and decadence. Some assume the identity of a lone prophet in the wilderness, their voices desperately calling for clear boundaries governing the communion of believers in the new denomination. But the wilderness is full of voices, each declaring a different witness or testimony, each removing itself from the whole. There is no time, place or energy for communal discernment because chaos reigns.

What if we made space for a new kind of order built on intergenerational community? What if those who are over 40 invited some young adults (single and married) to their house for an evening and talked theology and ethics with them? Issuing such an invitation means taking a risk.

Asking young adults what we think about any or all of the tricky issues we're facing, and letting us ask the same questions, may bring the many voices together. The we can walk out of the wilderness hand in hand. Surely then, we will know we are Christians by the love we have for one another.

I'm working at integration because I love the church. I find a great deal of meaning in the faith practices of the Mennonite church. My prayer for integration is that the many voices and visions will find common expression and articulation, giving glory to God in the highest and peace among those on earth.

Asking young adults what they think about any or all the tricky issues we're facing (and letting them ask you the same questions) may be the biggest risk this church needs to take.

Malinda Elizabeth Berry, a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., is a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart and an associate director for Mennonite Voluntary Service. She is a member of the Mennonite Church General Board and of the U.S. Country Committee working on integrated structures.

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Gordon Houser

Four ways to make a difference

My mother seemed to know the rules below by instinct, guided by love. Others, like me, like to see them in print. Then we struggle to understand them, let alone act on them.

Jeanne, my wife, is a school social worker. In March she attended a workshop where a speaker identified four ways social workers can make a difference in people's lives. They seem applicable to most of us as well.

1. Show up: This takes effort, commitment. Probably the most radical thing my mother did in raising me was simply being there. I took it for granted. But when I hear Jeanne mention some of the cases she faces, I'm shocked by how many parents—including mothers—are not there for their children.

Though not a mother at the time, Hannah showed up regularly at the temple to pray for a son (see article on page 4). Showing up in difficult situations requires courage, puts us in a vulnerable position, exposes us to the possibility of being disappointed.

Love allows truth to be heard. It also helps us overcome the fear that may prevent us at times from telling the truth.

2. Pay attention: In our culture, with its myriad ways of distracting us, this is perhaps one of the most difficult rules to follow. Prayer is essentially paying attention, listening to the voice of God within and looking for signs of God's presence around us.

Mary, the mother of our Lord, is a prime example of this quality. She heard the word of the Lord through the angel Gabriel (Luke 1), despite her fear, and obeyed the call to give birth to the Messiah.

We also need to pay attention to others. My mother listened to some of the bad poems I wrote in 10th grade as if they were good.

People rarely change their behavior if they do not feel heard. Listening serves not only a pastoral function but can be a nonviolent way to solve conflict. Violence, particularly by adolescents, often arises out of a need to gain attention. A man who interviewed Kip Kinkle after the 15-year-old in Springfield, Ore., shot his parents and several classmates last year, reported the boy saying, "Now they'll listen."

Making a difference requires paying attention to the Spirit's leading and listening to people's concerns.

3. Tell the truth: Some people find this rule easy to follow. At least they like to offer their opinion, whether or not it is the truth. Others, who want to be liked by others, cannot bring themselves to be entirely honest with them.

Truth can be tricky. We may often have an element of the truth that we'd like others to hear. Yet we often ignore aspects of the truth that speak to our own behavior. Telling the truth requires being confessional. If we want to make a difference, we cannot point out the faults of others without mentioning our own faults as well.

Gandhi said that the heart of peacemaking is truth telling, and he was exemplary in talking about his own faults. We cannot dare to change others unless we are willing to change. Civil disobedience, for Gandhi, was as much or more a discipline for his followers as it was an agent of change for his opponents.

The apostle Paul admonishes us to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Love allows truth to be heard. It also helps us overcome the fear that may prevent us at times from telling the truth. We are to speak truth for the good of others, not to one-up them. And failure to speak can be unloving in the end.

4. Let the results go: This is likely the hardest lesson for many of us. We like to see results. We are product-oriented. How do we know if we're doing the right thing if we don't have something to show for our effort?

Parenting requires great faith. We put years into raising children, but there are no guarantees. We don't know how our loved ones will turn out. When I think of all my mother did for me, all the time she invested in me, I'm in awe, and I pray it made some difference.

Whatever we do, we cannot control how things will turn out. We have to place the results in God's hands. This also frees us to be faithful to what we believe is right, even when the odds are against us.

These four rules sound simple, but they speak to the heart of what it means to follow Jesus. Like most mothers, let love guide us in making a difference in our world.—*gh*

the Mennonite

[illegible] 24 '99

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Personal peacemaking

Peacemaking begins with me. Peacemaking and justice-seeking go far beyond nonparticipation in and nonsupport of the military. Violence continues to explode everywhere. Preventing, reducing and eliminating violence in all relationships and situations, including personal and systemic areas and in my own heart, is the goal.

My vocation is to praise and serve God, share God's transforming grace; keep hope alive; invite people to become reconciled to God, to themselves and to each other; and find God's freeing nonviolent alternative that makes enemies into friends. This requires me to personally face, own and respond in reconciling love to the world's pain, brokenness, violence and war. This calls me to work for shalom: justice, health, well-being and wholeness for all people. Building peace-generating individuals and communities is outreach and evangelism.

I seek to follow this Jesus way of peacemaking until I am called home. I want to do this not with self-righteous piety or hardened duty but with love, humility, joy, hope, humor, warmth and a grace-full heart. I invite you to join me in responding to this continuing challenge and opportunity.—*Atlee Beechy, Goshen, Ind.*

More taxing thoughts

Re John F. Murray's letter on war taxes (April 20):

1. I agree that December is a good time to encourage charitable giving to reduce income tax liability.

2. Reducing income to below $12,500 (the point below which no taxes are owed by a married couple with no dependents) is more feasible than making charitable contributions to offset income with itemized deductions down to $5,400 (the comparable point below which no taxes are owed by the same married couple). A married couple earning $12,500 can avoid paying any taxes by virtue of their exemptions ($2,700 each), and the standard deduction ($7,100). However, a taxpayer earning more but offsetting income with itemized deductions (such as charitable contributions) cannot utilize the standard deduction, leaving only the personal exemption as a tax shield.

3. Withholding taxes due violates the U.S. Tax Code. Many Christians, especially members of the traditional peace churches, have long felt that the tax code violates their religion and their conscience and that it is a violation of God's law. Additional legal justifications for withholding taxes to prevent paying for war and killings include the Military Selective Service Act allowing for conscientious objection to participating in war and, by extension, paying for war. An estimated 10,000 people feel that this is the only way that they can speak truth when their government will not otherwise hear their pleas to work for peace.

4. The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, lobbying for the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund, has used contributions to build support for those conscientiously opposed to war. The head of this organization, Marian Franz, is a lifelong Mennonite. This legislation addresses the relief of human suffering by allowing us to earn higher incomes without supporting war efforts, thus allowing higher charitable contributions, for example. This legislation further spreads the cause of peace and relief from moral dilemma by making available to the full population of this country the possibility to decline participation in war efforts.

5. I agree that there are excellent tax advantages to be gained from contributing appreciated capital assets to charities. This approach, the suggested strategy of creating scholarships and other tax planning should be done in consultation with a tax professional. As far as individual personal agendas and political views related to charitable giving, I wish only to address the practical aspects of reducing income, supporting the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund and consulting a tax professional.—*Steven J. Olshewsky, tax instructor, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas*

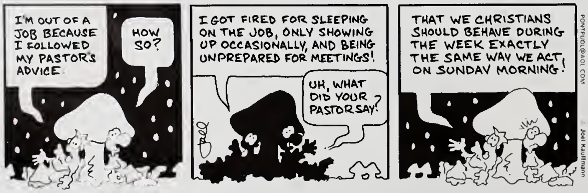
Unchanging

It would be a big mistake to say that the apostles and elders did away with circumcision when they met in Jerusalem (Acts 15). True circumcision is of the heart (Romans 4), just as it was for Abraham, who was first justified in his heart by faith before he initiated the outward symbol.

It seems like the meeting in Kansas City ("Consultation on Membership and Homosexuality Finds Little Common Ground on Disci-

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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MAY 14 '99

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Vol. 2, No. 18, May 11, 1999

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readers say

plined Churches," March 23) was like a convention to amend the constitution. If we want a more perfect union, we must look to Christ and the relationships that he has with the church, his holy bride. The Bible was not changed at Jerusalem, and it will not be changed now.—*Jonathan Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.*

Of destruction, kindness and kooks

After reading Kathleen Kern's article "Against the System" (April 20), I became concerned with the agenda the Mennonite denomination is advancing. Kern cites the examples of the midwives at the birth of Moses, Peter and John and their refusal to quit preaching the resurrected Christ, our ancestors' refusal to take up arms and other acts which she calls civil disobedience.

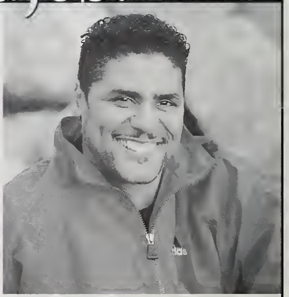
What troubles me is that these examples are used to excuse and encourage acts such as sabotage against this country's nuclear submarines and aggressive trespassing against military installations. These comparisons are not valid and fall in the same category as bombing abortion clinics. The examples that we should emulate are acts of kindness, not acts of destruction. Let's not align ourselves with militant peacemakers, people on the fringe of society or others seen as disreputable kooks.—*Harley Hofstetter, Apple Creek, Ohio*

Bird of lament

I am obediently putting the new bird symbol (of the integrated Mennonite Church) on our congregation's stationery. But let it be known that I lament—yea, verily, grieve—the end of the sturdy and serviceable cross-over-world (symbol of the General Conference Mennonite Church) that proclaimed "Jesus is Lord."
—*Muriel Stackley, Pawnee Rock, Kan.*

Cover photo
by James Carroll

I just got my first job.



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Still praying after more than a year

An experiment in Tuesday morning congregational prayer strikes a chord.

by Dorothy Nickel Friesen

It began innocently. On staff retreat, eight of us sat in an unair-conditioned conference center sharing our goals for the next year. I had asked, "How can we make the Vision: Healing and Hope statement come alive at First Mennonite this next year?"

We all agreed on the goal to "enrich our prayer, worship and study of the Scriptures." I suggested we encourage people to read the Scripture texts for each week (always in the previous Sunday's bulletin). I added that we could continue our Tuesday morning staff meetings with a devotional based on the next Sunday's Scripture texts.

That led to a suggestion that others may want to join our 8 a.m. devotional time—or at least be aware that the staff was focusing its spiritual energy at that time on certain texts and that we were praying for each other and for the congregation.

"But people work," someone said. "They have children to get ready for school. No one can be here at 8 a.m."

When I casually said, "Then, let's meet at 7 a.m.," the group laughed, then grew quiet. They knew their pastor well. I hate—well, dislike—early rising.

One thing led to another. We decided to read all four lectionary texts and follow each reading with generous amounts of silence. The "morning prayers" would begin at 7 a.m. and end promptly at 7:30 a.m. I would bring orange juice, Elaine would make coffee, and we'd ask Paula, who was beginning a baking business, to furnish cinnamon rolls. Everyone would gather in the sanctuary for readings, prayers, silence and reflection, then go to the fellowship hall for rolls and coffee.

On that first Tuesday, Sept. 2, 1997, 20 or so people came—plus the staff. We prayed together, listened to the Scriptures and laughed over morning coffee.

"It was the first week," I said at a staff meeting. "Next week there will be only a few. And when it's only staff attending, I will declare that this was a nice idea, and we'll go back to 8 a.m. staff meetings. No more early mornings for me."

Twenty months later, we are still praying at 7 a.m. on Tuesdays in Bluffton. We have never had less than that original crowd of 20; usually nearer to 40 pray-ers come. The only Tuesdays we have missed were the first weeks of January this year, when blizzards shut down everything—including schools, the college, businesses and highways.

We are still praying at 7 a.m. in Bluffton. We have never had less than that original crowd of 20; usually nearer to 40 pray-ers come.

College students, some with wet hair and droopy eyes, come. One parent in a family comes one week, the other the next, alternating child care and prayer time. Some are older folks who drive in the darkness of winter from Pandora, seven miles away. Some are farmers who are used to the early morning hours. An attorney, sometimes in formal business suit, prays. A jogger, on her way for a country run, stops for prayer before continuing her exercise. Music—organ, piano, solo voice, flute, congregational singing—has been used. A candle often burns. The sanctuary lights are purposely dimmed. It is quiet. There is no commentary. We always pray the Lord's Prayer. We always stand to receive a benediction and blessing as we leave the place of praying.

This prayer ritual has become a valued part of our ministry in the congregation. Even those who cannot attend (or will not get up that early) sense that focused prayer is happening. We receive requests for specific petitions and offer intercessions in that early morning hour.

I know that prayer has always been offered in our community. Now I know it even happens at 7 a.m.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Pastoral prayer

Why Lord, why? Why are violence and the threat of violence a constant reality? Why are people killing others just because they happen to be of different ethnic background? Why are violent force and punishment so often the solution of choice to solve conflicts? Why must people flee their homes and seek shelter in foreign lands? Why do people of faith kill people of faith? Lord, we ask "why" in Yugoslavia. We ask "why" in Israel. We ask "why" in Iraq. We ask "why" in our cities. We ask "why" in our families and our communities. Why?

Who Lord, who? Who will come in the name of the Lord, proclaiming wisdom and truth? Who will dare to offer a word from the Lord that will provide direction for our families, our church, our community, our nation, our world? Who will speak with authority and integrity? Who will confront the forces of evil and decry the blood-thirst of our leaders? Who will proclaim the word of God to a rebellious and selfish people? Who will be Christ's hands and feet and eyes and ears upon this earth? Who?

When Lord, when? When will peace come to the earth? When will we rest from the heavy burdens we carry within the depths of our souls? When will clarity come for the difficult decisions we hesitate to make? When will cures come for diseases that destroy our bodies and minds? When will death come to bodies that are weak and frail? When will others begin to see as we see and acknowledge their blindness? When will we be humble enough to hear your voice speaking to us? When will we be confident enough in our faith to share our faith with others? When will answers come to the difficult questions we ask? When?—*Doug Luginbill is assistant pastor at First Mennonite. He gave this prayer at the 7 a.m. gathering the Tuesday after Easter.*

Larry Bartel

Hesston College's Pastoral Ministries Program trains bivocational pastors.

Character & competence

by Gordon Houser

Let's say you are involved in your small congregation in various ways. You've taught Sunday school, visited some members who were ill, served on the church board and even given some sermons. Although you work full-time in another profession, you believe God may be calling you to be a pastor. However, you feel inadequate. You need training. You know you cannot afford the time or money for four to seven years of college and seminary. What do you do? You may want to contact Palmer Becker, the new director of Hesston (Kan.) College's Pastoral Ministries Program (PMP).

The two-year program, begun in 1985, has had 86 graduates come from various walks of life. Most of them move into pastorates, but not all. Terry Miller of Harrisonburg, Va., works in construction. Henry Wiens of San Angelo, Texas, is a chef. Richard Stoltzfus of Salt Lake City, Utah, is an airline pilot. Others are truck drivers, factory workers, students, health-care workers or chaplains.

> We want to have a transformational emphasis and keep the family clearly in focus.—*Palmer Becker*

Palmer does not see PMP as a replacement for seminary. It is designed for older students or those for whom four years of college and three years of seminary are not feasible. And it targets leaders of small congregations that cannot afford full-time pastors. About 65 percent of Mennonite Church congregations, for example, have fewer than 100 members, says Palmer. Many pastors of these smaller congregations are bivocational, not supported fully by the church.

Congregations play an important role in the program. Students in the PMP program must have not only sensed their calling to pastoral work, but their congregation has to affirm that calling as well.

Palmer, who began as PMP director six months ago, is an ordained Mennonite pastor who has served in several pastorates as well as in Taiwan, as executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and as a church planter.

PMP seeks to train people of character and competence. Formation classes help develop qualities of character, devotion and relationship, while skill classes help students learn to pray, preach, counsel, teach, evangelize and lead a church in a harmonious way. Since most people in the program do not have a college degree, classes include introductions to English, history, science, the Bible and theology. Biblical literature, taught by Marion Bontrager, is a capstone course. By the end of their training, students must be able to tell the salvation story from Genesis to Revelation.

Beyond the classwork, "students become a close-knit community," says Palmer. Ardys, Palmer's wife, works with spouses of students on their role. Also, each student serves a three-month supervised pastoral ministry experience in an approved setting. This usually occurs during the summer after the first year of classes. Then in the fall of the second year, students and faculty begin a placement process, looking for the type of ministry setting appropriate for each student's gifts, his or her personality, approach to leadership and ministry skills.

After graduation, PMP keeps in contact with students through a newsletter and alumni

A close-knit community: Pastoral Ministries Program director Palmer Becker (at right in photo at left) talks with students (from left) Lewis Miller, Joan Boyer and Chris Weaver.

gatherings and helps with placement. It offers practice interviews and keeps in touch with conference ministers about pastoral openings and needs of pastors.

Palmer's goal for PMP is to help students become "practical, Spirit-filled people who are academically and experientially strong." He says that 80 percent of what students learn at PMP should be usable in the pastorate. "We want to have a transformational emphasis," he adds, "and keep the family clearly in focus."

Palmer hopes to explore extension programs using video and email. Teaching weekends or two-week modules either at Hesston or at locations in the constituency are also possibilities. He sees bivocational pastors as an increasing need in the future and wants PMP students to keep one foot in the world not only for needed income but also for connections with people and issues in the everyday world of work.

There is plenty of need for pastors, he says, and thus plenty of need for pastoral training.

Gordon Houser is associate editor for features for The Mennonite.

'You can handle it'

Violeta Ajquejay is not a pastor but works with pastors. She is administrative assistant for Hispanic Ministries, a program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. In that job she is in contact with Hispanic Mennonite pastors, and , after graduating from Hesston's Pastoral Ministries Program (PMP) in 1996, she says she has a better understanding of what pastors' work entails.

File photo

Violeta Ajquejay

"I don't get as frustrated with them and their schedules as I used to," she says. Her studies at PMP taught her how demanding pastors' work is.

While most students' calls to the PMP come through their congregations, Violeta's came from the Hispanic Ministries Reference Council, which helps oversee Hispanic Ministries. PMP was flexible, she says, and allowed her to study part-time while continuing with her job.

Her experience was invaluable, she says. She learned much about the Bible and how to work with people, which she uses not only in relating to Hispanic pastors but in her work as associate director of the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, which trains Hispanic church leaders. She also tutors three students studying via correspondence.

Violeta's practicum during her studies was at Comunidad de Fe in Chicago. She worked with Ingrid Schultz, pastor at that time, who showed great confidence in this student. During Violeta's first week there, Ingrid went on a trip and left Violeta in charge. "You can handle it," she said. And Violeta did.

She wanted to work with Ingrid not only because she pastored a Hispanic congregation but also because, like Violeta, she was a woman and was single. Her experience there was "wonderful," she says. "The people there were very welcoming."

She also saw the tremendous amount and variety of work that Ingrid did. She says people tend to take advantage of a single person and ask more from them.

Does Violeta see herself in pastoral ministry in the future? "Maybe," she says. But not right away.—*Gordon Houser*

Learning by doing: from the classroom to the congregation

David Roth's first call to ministry came when he was 16 and heard a sermon about the prophet Samuel. David's most recent call came last month when a congregation in Louisiana invited him to serve as pastor.

A construction worker near Grand Island, Neb., David moved to Hesston, Kan., from Wood River Mennonite Church. After graduating in May from Hesston College, he will begin pastoring Des Allemands (La.) Mennonite Church.

"When we came to Hesston College, I was thinking about missionary work," says David, whose wife, Connie, is a Bible major. "In the first semester it became clear that my call was to pastoral ministry."

In courses required for the associate of arts degree as well as his major in pastoral ministries, David has taken everything from college writing and introduction to computers to Anabaptist history and pastoral care.

While these classes have provided the well-rounded education David sought when he enrolled in Hesston's Pastoral Ministries Program in the fall of 1996, his three-credit-hour supervised ministry experience stands out as most important for him. David spent last summer under the tutelage of pastor Dean Linsenmeyer atthe Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church near Inman, Kan.

"It's impossible to think that you can come into the Hesston program and expect that by the time you leave you will understand everything a pastor does. Supervised ministry gives you an example of what pastoring is all about. It helped to be with a pastor and in a congregation willing to help me explore the ministry," David says.

He believes his Hoffnungsau internship provided the best learning experience he has had while studying for the ministry. "It meant taking eveything I'd learned in the classroom—and many things I hadn't yet learned—and applying them to the ministry and everyday life," he says.

David's candidating with the Louisiana congregation and acceptance of the church's call puts him closer to the work of a pastor. He looks forward to working with this 80-member church planted in 1937 by two couples from Pennsylvania.

"The people at Des Allemands, many from Cajun background, have a spirit of wanting to reach out to the community. It will be a challenge for me to equip them for this ministry and to help them understand their gifts," David says.

David Roth has answered the call.—*June Krehbiel*

Delbert Tieszen

It became clear that my call was to pastoral ministry.

—*David Roth*

The power of surrender

by Jan Johnson

Twice I picked up the telephone to call a woman at church who had made disparaging comments about the way my teenage daughter dressed for church. Should I explain to her why girls my daughter's age dress that way? No, too defensive. Should I tell her to mind her own business? Tempting, but no. Was I stirring up trouble (by calling her) or being a chicken (by not calling)? Was there a better way?

As I pondered the many times I've turned my daughter over to God—her ambivalence toward school, her insecurity after we moved—it occurred to me I could surrender this woman to God, too. All my life my need to get others' approval, to achieve and to make everyone OK have driven my life. One by one, day by day, over and over, I have had to surrender these heart issues.

Surrender isn't easy for those of us who think being a good Christian means being successful. We think we can fix anybody or solve any problem if we roll up our sleeves, pull up our socks and hustle hard enough.

Even in our relationship with God, we strain to be good enough. We read books, listen to tapes and attend seminars to find precise formulas to reshape ourselves into a better "me." All that straining discourages us, wears us out and makes us insensitive to others. We live under the illusion that if we acquire complete control, we can do God's will. Instead we have to abandon control.

Superwoman image: To abandon control I must surrender my need to achieve more, look more attractive and own more stuff. I have to present myself as just who I am and find rest in God even if my plain fingernails and faulty memory make me lose the superwoman image I crafted.

Letting go is too simple and too hard. It looks like weakness instead of strength, like losing instead of gaining—and it is. As we relinquish control and admit weaknesses, we remember who we are and why we're here. Life is a journey of coming to know God, not achieving or gaining others' approval. It's OK for us just to be, to love God. Through that being, God will do mightier works than when we try so hard.

Surrendering requires that I learn to recognize my inner neediness and hear my self-absorbed motives. Why must I achieve? Is it because I fear I will live my whole life and never do anything spectacular like the women I read about in magazines? Why do I act as if I can earn God's grace and approval? Do I think I can manipulate God's opinion of me?

This need to control is rooted in fear, but I need to surrender, which is rooted in faith. It's as if God stops me, an earnest, twirling ballerina, and says, "You don't have to perform for me. I will lead you, and it will work better that way. Give me your hand."

Sometimes I go to church early on Sunday morning and climb the steps to the balcony, where no one else goes. I sit, surrounded by sound equipment, and pray: "One more time, God, here are my children. One more time, here is my hunger for glamour and glory." Sometimes I fall to my knees and offer the things I use to satisfy inner needs but that block my path to God: eating sweets, raising perfect children, defending myself eloquently. I wonder, Will life's failures and disappointments be too much for me if I don't have a stash of chocolate for comfort? Will I be OK if I don't stand up for myself? Will I survive emotionally if other people don't look up to me?

Open arms: The more honest I am, the longer I must stretch out my hands, palms turned up, presenting my open arms to God. My fingers tremble at their emptiness. It's such a stretch to remember that all I ever signed up to do in the Christian life is cling to God with everything I've got. I keep trying to get it right, but God says: "Stop trying so hard; abide in me. Let me work in you. Give me your heart."

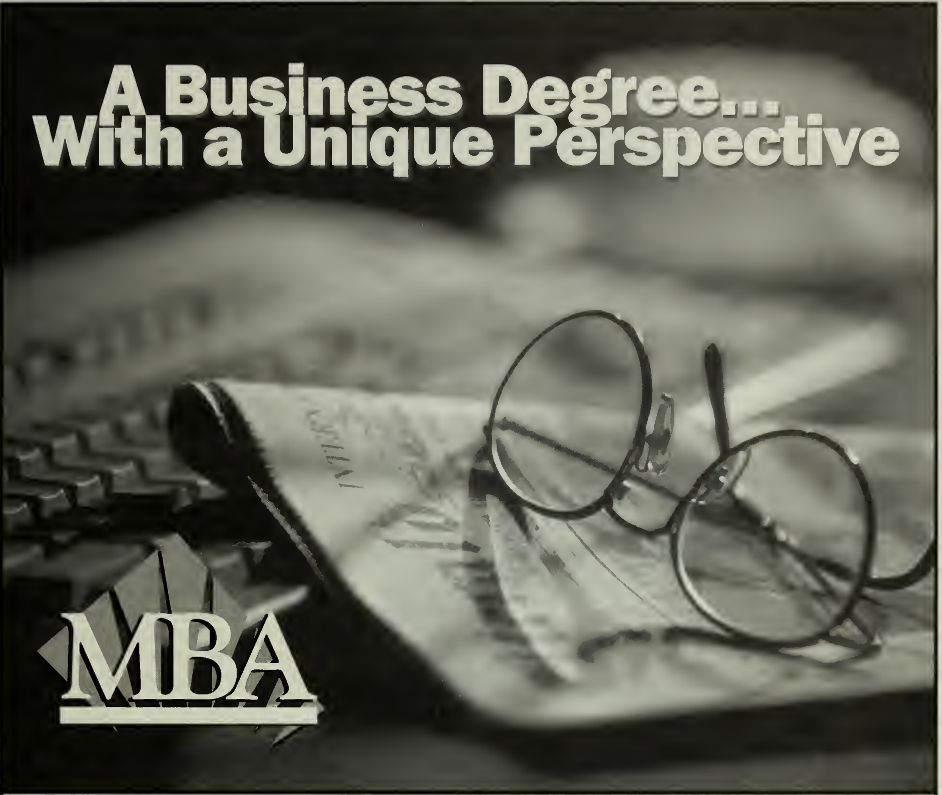
Responding to God's call to surrender forces me to value my brokenness as well as my strength. Holding a funeral for my own wonderfulness, I accept my limitations and give God permission to work redemptively in my life, just as he did when he molded the apostle Paul, a former murderer, into the author of much of the New Testament. Paul's brokenness kept God's grace front and center in his mind, reminding him, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Galatians 2:19b-20a).

That brokenness brings a new edge to conversion. When my teenagers' brokenness and disappointment force me to turn them over to God, praying one more time, "Into your hands," the results are incredible. My heart of stone is transformed into a heart of flesh, and Christ lives in me as the gentle, tender mother I could never be on my own.

At the close of my conversation with God, I leave the balcony free and clean until it's time to return.

Surrender isn't easy for those of us who think being a good Christian means being successful. We think we can fix anybody or solve any problem if we roll up our sleeves, pull up our socks and hustle hard enough.

Jan Johnson is a retreat speaker and author of Enjoying the Presence of God *and* Listening to God: Using Scripture as a Path to God's Presence. *She lives in Simi, Calif.*



Eastern Mennonite University has launched a new kind of Master of Business Administration program. One that is geared to mid-career people in small and medium-size businesses and non-profit organizations. The program builds on the strengths of EMU's highly respected Department of Business & Economics.

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Eastern Mennonite University

After finding his own identity, MWC president helps shape identity of international church

SALATIGA, Indonesia—Growing up in Indonesia during and following World War II, Sing Kiem Dhong was going to become a doctor. At least that's what his parents wanted for him—and he didn't object, even as he struggled to shake a pair of questions: Who am I? What will my future be?

For much of the Anabaptist world, those questions have been answered. Sing Kiem Dhong isn't a doctor. He isn't even Sing Kiem Dhong anymore. He is now Mesach Krisetya, and since 1997 he has been president of Mennonite World Conference (MWC), helping guide the church as it grows in numbers and vitality outside North America and Europe.

Krisetya

"Prophetic voices are coming from the Southern Hemisphere, and I believe they will begin to change the church," Krisetya says. "I believe that interdependence will begin to happen, that there will be a new mix."

But long before he could become an international Mennonite leader, Krisetya needed to become a Christian. He was raised in a home that practiced Confucianism and ancestor worship. While struggling with issues of purpose and belonging, he was invited by a friend to a Bible camp run by Mennonites.

"I had no idea what the Bible camp was, but he was a friend, so I thought, 'Why not?' " Krisetya says. "I went with all my stress about my identity, all my questions about why I was born, why I was here."

What he discovered at the camp was Matthew 6:33: "But strive first for the kingom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will given to you as well."

"That suddenly became my answer," Krisetya says. "It focused my thinking so much that I went forward at the altar call."

Two weeks after the camp, at his friend's urging, Krisetya applied to a Baptist seminary to study for the pastorate. Four years later, in 1965, he moved into church leadership, becoming pastor of the Mennonite congregation in his hometown of Jepara. "Where I was born anew was with the Mennonites, so I stuck with the Mennonites," Krisetya says.

Political developments two years later gave the young pastor opportunity to proclaim his faith in an unusual manner. The Indonesian government decided to establish the loyalty of its people. Residents of non-native ethnicities—such as Arabs, Chinese and Indians—had to declare their Indonesian citizenship and select Indonesian names. So Krisetya, of Chinese ethnicity, had to shuck his Chinese name.

"In our area, the Christians all chose names that incorporated Christ," he says. "I became Mesach Krisetya."

Mesach was a friend of Daniel in the Old Testament, a survivor of the fiery furnace. Krisetya combines two words: "Kris" means "Christ," and "Setya" means "loyal" or "truthful."

"So my name means 'the fireproof man loyal to Christ," he says. "I hope that I can be one."

The 1970s saw Krisetya shift from pastoring to pastoral care and counseling. He received a master's degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., and a doctorate from the School of Theology in Claremont, Calif. He is head of the department of pastoral care of Satya Wacana Christian University and is vice president of the International Council on Pastoral Care and Counseling.

The 1970s also introduced Krisetya to MWC. While an AMBS student, he attended his first assembly in 1972 at Curitiba, Brazil. Twenty years later he became a member of the Executive Committee, emerging as an advocate for increased mutuality among member churches.

"Mennonite World Conference is the only organization where Mennonites and Brethren in Christ from around the world can say what they want to say on an equal basis," says Krisetya, who lives in Salatiga. "I am still dissatisfied that MWC is seen primarily as an organization ... to arrange the next conference."

To move beyond that will mean addressing some difficult issues. "We will need to decide whether we can agree that we have differences and that our differences will not separate us," he says. "We should not impose our traditions on each other or let doctrine divide us.

"Mennonite World Conference's emphasis should be on service. We do need a common belief and hope—and we have that. Then together we serve."—*MWC News Service*

Mutual influence goal for MWC

Mennonite World Conference president Mesach Krisetya wants to see MWC as more than just an international assembly every six years.

"We ought to pick up ideas that create relationships, that create mutual influence," Krisetya says. "For example, Joram Mbeba [a Tanzanian Mennonite bishop and MWC Executive Committee member] recently asked me to come to Tanzania to provide some pastoral care and counseling. This is the kind of exchange that can happen with global coordination."

Another recent development was the March 16-April 8 visit of 12 Mennonite Bible teachers to the Holy Land for a Jerusalem Seminar. It was sponsored by MWC and Mennonite Central Committee and led by Mennonite Central Committee staff. While North Americans have been participating in Jerusalem Seminars for a number of years, this was the first one for people from the Third World.

"This seminar gave me the feeling of being an eyewitness to what I have long read in the Gospels," says Siaka Traore of Burkina Faso.—*MWC News Service*

South Dakota Sioux take a stand for land

Camp protesting federal legislation garners support

PIERRE, S.D.—A peaceful demonstration for South Dakota Sioux land rights and against recent federal legislation has drawn support from Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Northern District Conference.

Since March 22, a handful of Sioux men, accompanied by three CPT workers, have been camping on LaFramboise Island in the Missouri River near Pierre to protest the Wildlife Mitigation Act, which turns much of the river's banks in South Dakota to the state and only two Sioux tribes. The protesters claim the land transfer violates an 1868 treaty that gave what is now western South Dakota to all Sioux tribes, known as the Great Sioux Nation.

"I believe if nothing is done, the state will take the land and build commercial waterfronts for boats and skis, and the spirits of our ancestors might be threatened," says Robert Quiver Jr., a member of the Oglala Sioux tribe.

CPT, MCC and Northern District Conference have formed a network to raise public awareness of the protest. A delegation of conference members from the Freeman, S.D., area has visited LaFramboise Island to offer support to the protesters and educate themselves. MCC has provided some financial assistance, and CPT has plans to stay until at least May 22.

The Wildlife Mitigation Act, part of Congress' 1999 omnibus appropriations bill, affects 200,000 acres held in a trust by the federal government and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Great Sioux Nation. The Cheyenne River and Lower Brule tribes were offered riverbank land along their reservation boundaries plus $57 million to share. In return, the state would gain the rest of the riverbank land on both sides of the Missouri River running through the state. The land would be used for hydroelectric power, wildlife and recreational development.

Some Cheyenne River and Lower Brule members claim the act was added without a hearing and against the wishes of the other Sioux tribes. They claim the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, which created the Great Sioux Reservation, including the Missouri River banks and western South Dakota, gives all tribes water and mineral rights to the land now in dispute. The seven other tribes are also opposing the act.

"Everyone has a right to the land, even if they don't live along the river," says Sue Eagle, who with her husband, Harley, coordinates MCC U.S. work on the Pine Ridge reservation in southwestern South Dakota.

Because of concerns about violence and racism, MCC and the South Dakota Center for Peace and Justice invited CPT to LaFramboise Island. "We requested a presence from the outside to be witnesses on the island and interact with the government," Eagle says.

Freeman (S.D.) *Courier* photo by Amy Bennett

Jeanette Epp and Anette Eisenbeis talk with Harley and Sue Eagle (left to right) outside a teepee on LaFramboise Island, in the Missouri River near Pierre, S.D. Epp and Eisenbeis, members of Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D., were part of a delegation organized by Northern District Conference to visit the island camp created by a group of Sioux to protest recent federal legislation transferring ownership of 200,000 acres of riverbank land. The Eagles are Mennonite Central Committee U.S. program coordinators on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has kept the camp under surveillance.

South Dakota Gov. Bill Janklow maintains that the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty is no longer valid because none of the current parties in the dispute signed it. Furthermore, government officials cite a 1903 case that invalidated any treaty made before 1871.

"Even if the state wanted to recognize the treaty of 1868, it can't," says Bob Mercer, the governor's press secretary.

Harley Eagle disagrees. He cites a federal court decision in the early 1980s declaring that it was illegal for the federal government in the late 19th century to wrest away the Black Hills, then also a part of the Great Sioux Reservation as determined by the 1868 treaty.

"It was decided that the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 was and is still valid," Harley Eagle says. "Presently, in yet another deceptive and illegal act, more land is being taken away from the Great Sioux Nation through the Mitigation Act."

"It has to stop somewhere," says CPT member JoAnn Kaufman. "There has to be a way to live together or make justice where pain has been."—Freeman *(S.D.)* Courier *and MCC News Service*

> It has to stop somewhere. There has to be a way to live together or make justice where pain has been.
>
> *—JoAnn Kaufman*

The only Mennonites in Finland

Mission work is about who you are, MBM couple says

TURKU, Finland—As far as they know, Stephen and Margot Longley and their two children are the only Mennonites in Finland.

Although they belong to a Swedish-language Methodist church on the country's southwest coast, the Longleys' connections as Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers keep them plugged in to their Anabaptist beliefs. Each year they travel to the European Colloquium, an inspirational gathering of Mennonite mission workers on that continent, held earlier this year in Turku. It is there, they say, that they receive their annual bolstering of Anabaptist perspective and fellowship.

"In some ways, the colloquium is our best connection to the Mennonite church," Margot says. "It can get quite lonely feeling like the only Mennonites in all of Finland."

Margot, who is Finnish, met Stephen, an Englishman, in London in the mid-1970s. They were both participating in a Youth With a Mission discipleship training school program. While waiting for Margot to finish her YWAM assignment, Stephen stayed in London to be near her. He was invited to join an international student house being started in north London. The house was owned by MBM.

"It was at what is now the London Mennonite Centre that I first came into real contact with Mennonites," Stephen says. "The theology of Anabaptism intrigued me."

The Longleys, who had been part of Wood Green Mennonite Church in London, previously served with MBM in Nepal. Now they are MBM overseas mission associates, who do not work full-time in outreach. Margot is a seminary student, and Stephen works as a bookkeeper for a children's home.

But they consider their mission work to be living lives as faithfully as possible in the midst of a country dominated by the state-run Lutheran Church. It is a powerful institution that needs to be respected. For North Americans, fully grasping the overwhelming feeling that comes from a state church is extremely difficult.

"The state church has a say in many things in the government," Margot says. "It is possible for them to control many areas of everyday life. If, for example, we ever wanted to start a Mennonite church here in Finland, the state church [could] make it very difficult for us."

Margot regularly introduces Anabaptist perspectives into her classes at the Lutheran seminary in Turku. Generally, she says, there is a great deal of respect shown for her theological leanings, and the give-and-take of discussions has yielded new understandings for her, her fellow classmates and even her professors. When Margot graduates, however, there will be a difficult decision to be made.

Mennonite Board of Missions workers in Finland Stephen and Margot Longley and their children Timothy, 14, and Maria, 16.

"We must decide if I will be ordained in the Lutheran Church and possibly be called to pastor in a Lutheran church," she says. "This is a difficult decision because there are fundamental differences between Mennonites and Lutherans that I do not know how to overcome."

Regardless of the final decision, the Longleys intend to keep living a simple life, witnessing by example their Anabaptist faith.

"Being a missionary is about how you live your life every day," Stephen says. "It is not about living in harsh conditions in a poor country or about preaching Jesus Christ on the street. We are missionaries in our friendships with those who have rejected the state church and believe there is no other place to turn. We are missionaries in our own congregation, where issues of nonviolence and war and a simple lifestyle come up from time to time. We are missionaries to our children as they come to the age of questioning God and faith, and we must do our best to live our faith without forcing it upon them.

"Being a missionary has little to do with the job you do," Stephen continues. "It has everything to do with who you are."—*Christy Risser for MBM News Service*

MDS begins work after Plains storms

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) units in Oklahoma and Kansas have begun cleanup efforts after the series of deadly tornadoes that ripped through the region on May 3.

Oklahoma City, site of the worst damage, remained in a state of national emergency on May 5, preventing MDS volunteers from working there. So they have turned their efforts to the rural areas around the city. MDS expects to establish a long-term response in central Oklahoma, says regional MDS coordinator Vernon Miller.

The Kansas MDS unit is assisting cleanup efforts in Haysville, just south of Wichita.

There are no reports of casualties or damage to church buildings among the Mennonite congregations in the stricken areas.—*Rich Preheim*

EMU $22 million building project draws criticism as student group protests groundbreaking

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) broke ground April 24 for its $22 million University Commons building project. But not everyone was celebrating.

While some 250 people gathered for the ceremony, a student group held a bake sale nearby to express their opposition to the project. The students unfurled a banner that said, "It will be a great day when the student endowment gets million-dollar gifts and the administration has to hold bake sales," referring to the student-initiated scholarship fund.

Speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony, Student Government Association co-president Grant Rosenberger expressed his support for the new facility. But when there are so many needs in the world, he said, "It is hard for some students to justify spending so much money on a building for ourselves."

The University Commons project, EMU's most ambitious undertaking ever, will provide facilities for athletics, theater, academics and other activities. Phase 1, for which $11.5 million has already been raised, is scheduled to be completed by next summer. The second phase will include total renovation of the Student Center.

"We will build the mind, body and soul in this new building," said EMU president Joseph L. Lapp, who during the ceremony acknowledged the "diversity of opinion" over the project.

The groundbreaking ceremony was held during EMU's commencement weekend. On April 24, 18 graduates of Eastern Mennonite Seminary received their diplomas. Degrees were granted the next day to 332 graduate and undergraduate students.

Photo by Jim Bishop

Eastern Mennonite University senior Andrew D. Miller of Scottdale, Pa., balances a custom-made, oversized mortar board during the school's commencement ceremony April 25. Degrees were granted to 332 graduates. The weekend also included the graduation of 18 seminary students and a groundbreaking ceremony for the school's $22 million University Commons building project.

Bethel begins new dorm

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—A one-bottom plow was used April 26 to break ground for a new $3.5 million residence hall at Bethel College.

The three-story facility, which will hold 96 students in modular living, is expected to be completed by July 2000. It will be located near current dormitories Haury Hall and Warkentin Court. A third dormitory, Goering Hall, will be renovated for other uses.

Part of the funding for the new facility is expected to come from the J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation, Tulsa, Okla., which last month awarded Bethel a $1.4 million challenge grant. To receive the grant, Bethel must raise an additional $3.4 million by April 14, 2000.

Colorado churches get taste of St. Louis

This wasn't a typical congregational fellowship meal.

As piano and oboe provided background music, members of two Colorado congregations recently dined on canapés, antipasto, secondi piatti and dolci to raise money for their youth groups to attend St. Louis 99.

The five-course meal of Italian and French cuisine raised $1,716 to benefit the youth groups of East Holbrook Mennonite Church, Cheraw, and Emmanuel Mennonite Church, La Junta. Some 120 people were served.

The idea was born when Ron Schmucker, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and former member of the Emmanuel youth group, volunteered to prepare the menu, purchase the supplies and organize the preparation.

Canadian Mennonite Bible College graduates 50th class

WINNIPEG—Upstairs from where Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) held its first classes, the school granted degrees to its 50th graduating class on April 25.

Thirty-two students received their diplomas during the commencement ceremony, held at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. When the school was started in 1947, classes were first held in the church's basement.

Beginning in September 1999, CMBC will offer programs with Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Concord College and independent Menno Simons College, both in Winnipeg, as partners in the Mennonite College Federation. Work on a new campus will start later this year.

Noting the graduating class's chosen theme of Isaiah 64:8, former CMBC president John Neufeld told the students, "You have chosen to be on this potter's wheel … to be shaped by Yahweh's hands."

German church denounces Balkans violence, urges peace through conflict resolution

NIEDERGORSDORF, Germany—Condemning human rights violations inflicted by Serbia on the Kosovars and lamenting missed opportunities for finding peaceful alternatives, the Union of German Mennonite Congregations has approved a statement on the conflict in the Balkans.

"We stand in the tradition of the historic peace churches," says the statement, adopted at the union's annual meeting April 24 in Niedergörsdorf. "Unimaginable suffering is being inflicted upon the people of Kosovo. This we condemn. We cannot tolerate the human-rights violations. We do not value national sovereignty higher than these rights."

The statement then goes on to criticize the use of violence in the conflict. "Many opportunities for an alternative political development were missed in the past. … Reconciliation among the different ethnic groups in the Balkans becomes less likely because every additional use of violence forces all of the involved to identify with one or the other side of the conflict, and bilateral hatred will increase.

"We believe in the power that grows out of God's reconciling love and in the gospel of Jesus Christ. … Therefore, we call upon all of the parties in this conflict to reason together to break out of the violence spiral and to find ways to peace through civilian conflict resolution."

The statement concludes with a commitment to support the work of Mennonite Central Committee and other agencies to meet refugee needs caused by the Balkans conflict.

Fernando Enns, vice chair of the union, says the conflict had not been on the meeting's agenda. "But I had the strong feeling that we could not have an annual meeting without saying something," he says. "So I brought this statement to the meeting, and we discussed and changed it, and it became a consensus document."—*MWC News Service*

> We call upon all of the parties in this conflict to reason together to break out of the violence spiral.
>
> —*Statement by the Union of German Mennonite Congregations*

Worker travels to Balkans to reach out for peace

ELKHART, Ind.—On Easter Sunday, Jeff Linthicum stood in the no-man's land between Hungary and Serbia, placed his hands on the soil and prayed for an end to the continuing violence in the former Yugoslavia.

Linthicum, of First Mennonite Church in Berne, Ind., is serving in London, England, with RAD, or Reaching and Discipling, a service and discipleship program of Mennonite Board of Missions, Great Lakes area congregations and regional conferences.

Linthicum

Linthicum went to the Balkans with Jonathan and Liz Bullamore Brown, two Britons who are considering missionary service in Serbia. Armed only with Bibles, they sought to bring a message of peace to a people whose country was being bombed by their governments.

"We didn't gain access to Serbia itself, but we were on the doorstep. We were technically out of Hungary," says Linthicum, a U.S. Navy veteran turned pacifist. "[The border guards] couldn't understand why people would come to a location where there's possible danger to come and minister.

"We just prayed for the Prince of Peace to come. … We were praying for the whole situation: the Kosovo refugees, the bombing in Serbia."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

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Canadian conferences to explore integration

TOFIELD, Alta.—The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and Northwest Conference have taken the first step toward regional integration. A four-member task force—two people from each conference—will study issues such as theology, polity, differences and commonalities.

The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta is a provincial conference of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada; Northwest is a Mennonite Church area conference. Both approved the task force earlier this year at a joint conference in Tofield. The task force is scheduled to bring a report in late summer to the conferences' joint executive committee. *—Canadian Mennonite*

34 students to receive AMBS degrees

ELKHART, Ind.—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary will graduate 34 students in a May 21 service at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. The commencement speaker will be Leontine T.C. Kelly, a retired United Methodist bishop, the first African-American woman to be elected bishop of a major denomination.

Twenty-two students will graduate with master of divinity of degrees, 10 with master of arts in theological studies degrees and two with master of arts in peace studies degrees. Eight of the graduating students come from Canada; one each come from India, Japan and Rwanda.

Speaker lifts up Paul as mission example

DES PLAINES, Ill.—Some 70 area conference mission leaders were urged to be "as bold to speak the gospel today as Paul was in Corinth" during an April 17-20 conference in Des Plaines.

Guest speaker J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., noted the similarities between modern North American cities and Corinth during the time of Paul's ministry. His work was focused on urban areas, such as Corinth, where many cultures and religions met.

"There is an expectation of tolerance that provincializes the gospel," Kraybill said. "We get wooed into an environment of mutual respect. I think Paul went beyond that."

The conference invited two people from each General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada area conference.*—GCMC, MBM and CMC news services*

Indigenous Guatemalans tour Latin America

ALTA VERAPAZ, Guatemala—Two K'eckchi' Mennonite leaders from Guatemala discovered commonalities with other indigenous groups during a recent visit of Argentina, Paraguay and Peru.

Visiting with Argentina's Toba and Mocovi people, Paraguay's Lengua, Chulupi and Angait people and the Quechua of Peru, Sebastian Cuc and Alfredo Siquic noted their common histories of conquest by the Spaniards and discrimination and oppression for more than 500 years.

The two K'eckchi' leaders also visited work being done by the church, such as a Christian radio station and alcohol rehabilitation center in Paraguay, Bible teaching in Argentina and youth work in Peru.*—EMM and MCC news services*

Bluffton surpasses capital campaign goal

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College's Second Century capital campaign has exceeded its goal of $15.2 million by nearly $1 million, the school's board of trustees learned at their April 23-24 meeting. The total ensures a $450,000 Kresge Foundation challenge grant, which will be used for Buffton's new academic center. Construction on the $8.5 million facility started in January.

by the way …

Only 15 of Pacific Southwest Conference's 38 congregations are more than 30 years old.—*Panorama*

MCC photo by John Spidaliere

SALTer of the earth

Katie Friesen helps students in an elementary school in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, where she teaches English. Friesen is serving for a year with SALT (Serving and Learning Together), Mennonite Central Committee's young-adult program. "I enjoy the work here," says the 23-year-old native of Albany, Ore. "These kids are full of vigor and want to learn as much as they can." Friesen is associated with Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Events

Indiana-Michigan Conference annual meeting, June 24-26, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Pacific Southwest Conference annual meeting, June 25-26, Tucson, Ariz.

Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District conferences joint annual meeting, June 25-27, Kalona, Iowa.

Allegheny Conference annual meeting, July 8-11, Laurelville, Pa.

Workers

Bame, Brad, has begun a pastorate at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Buller, Paul, has begun a pastorate at Disciples Mennonite Church, Duluth, Minn.

Hamsher, Bruce, was licensed March 21 as pastor of Chestnut Ridge Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Hange, Roy, has begun a pastorate at Charlottesville (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Hochstetler, Wayne C., has been named conference minister for Illinois Conference and a conference minister for Central District Conference.

Janzen, Susan E., has begun a pastorate at New Hope Mennonite Church, Omaha, Neb.

Miracle, David, was licensed March 28 as pastor of Greenmonte Mennonite Church, Stuarts Draft , Va.

Monroe, Earl, has begun a pastorate at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

Whaley, Al, has been named an area conference minister for Pacific Southwest Conference.

Births

Baer, Elias Yordy, March 17, to Jeanne (Yordy) and Matt Baer, Tucson, Ariz.

Burbank, Logan Jared, April 13, to Lynda Beth (Kropf) and Tim Burbank, Phoenix.

Collinson, Carter Fraser, March 29, to Fraser and Linda (Carter) Collinson, Atwood, Ont.

Duncan, Lauren Elizabeth, March 5, to Kurt and Michelle (Short) Duncan, Circleville, Ohio.

Graves, Kirsten Ann, April 9, to Jim and Kim (Yoder) Graves, Goshen, Ind.

Graybill, Kevin Jacob, April 16, to Jeana (Martin) and Kevin Graybill, Stevens, Pa.

Horner, Esther Annrae, April 17, to Carl and Stephanie (Haines) Horner, Wakarusa, Ind.

Jensen, Mariah Jayne, April 20, to Curt and Kristi (Buller) Jensen, Henderson, Neb.

Kerry, Brett Dustin, April 12, to Beverly (Gingrich) and Larry Kerry Jr., Mount Joy, Pa.

Miller, Alyssa Sue, April 13, to Crystal (Richard) and Tom Miller, Sunnyvale, Calif.

Ramseyer, Jacob Earl, April 7, to Eric and Roxie (Lehman) Ramseyer, Orrville, Ohio.

Sharp, Carson Jay, April 15, to Amy (Litwiller) and Doug Sharp, Gilbert, Ariz.

Sharp, Samuel Gabriel, April 15, 1999, received for adoption April 16, 1999, by Duane and Stephanie Sharp, Shipshewana, Ind.

Marriages

Birk/Kulp: Scott Birk, Nappanee, Ind., and Kim Kulp, Elkhart, Ind., April 17 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Evans/Kauffman: James Evans, Goshen, Ind., and Lana Kauffman, Goshen, March 20 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Gelement/Nafziger: Lyudamila Gelement, Kalona, Iowa, and Christopher Nafziger, Wellman, Iowa, March 14 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Hall/Kauffman: Curt Hall, Arthur, Ill., and Darlene Kauffman, Arthur, April 17 at Arthur (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Heinrichs/Tyacke: Amanda Heinrichs, Aurora, Colo., and Robert Tyacke, Denver, March 27 at Peace Mennonite Church, Aurora.

Horst/Landis: Ryan Horst, Blue Ball, Pa., and Jessica Landis, Exton, Pa., March 27.

Steele/Weaver: Erin Steele, East Peoria, Ill., and Keith Weaver, Hopedale, Ill., April 24 at Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Albrecht, Roy, 76, Pigeon, Mich., died April 3. Spouse: Katie Bontrager Albrecht (deceased). Parents: Emanuel and Katie Shetler Albrecht (deceased). Survivors: children Donna Burkholder, Janet Kazlusky, Betty Birky, Bonnie Crawford, Glen, Galen; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Pigeon.

Banman, Paul, 72, Newton, Kan., died April 11. Spouse: Irene Bender Banman. Parents: Samuel and Selma Schmidt Banman (deceased). Other survivors: children Sharon Fox, Paula Steele; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton.

Delp, Robert Henry, 41, Manheim, Pa., died April 18, of cancer. Spouse: Wanda Byler Delp. Parents: Henry (deceased) and Joyce Landis Delp. Other survivors: children Tracy, Sharon, Joshua. Funeral: April 21 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Fretz, Jacob Millard, 86, Wichita, Kan., died April 11. Spouse: Evelyn Sheppard Nicholson Fretz. Parents: Jacob Rittenhouse and Mary Rickert Fretz (deceased). Other survivors: children David, Donna Voth, three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 14 at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita.

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run to the **store**
run to the bank
pick up the kids
pick up the **pace**
pick up the house   finish the meal   rinse out the tub   turn down the lights
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Haldeman, Irene, 85, Ephrata, Pa., died April 1. Spouse: Carl Haldeman (deceased). Parents: Pierce and Cora Getz Hellinger (deceased). Survivors: children Clyde, Dorothy Herr, Romaine Wolf; 13 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at East Cocalico Township, Pa.

Honsaker, John, 81, Martinsburg, Pa., died April 14 of complications from surgery. Spouse: Elizabeth Wolgemuth Honsaker (deceased). Parents: Ray and Nora Metzler Honsaker (deceased). Survivors: children Ann Muñoz, Jean Yoder, Peggy Bechtel, Karl, Judy Walter; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Martinsburg.

Hunsberger, Ada Keller, 81, Souderton, Pa., died April 14. Spouse: Franklin Hunsberger (deceased). Parents: Milton and Mae Delp Keller (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Donna Garis, Bryan; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Souderton.

Hutchison, Catharine, 95, Goshen, Ind., died April 6. Spouse: Erle Hutchison (deceased). Parents: Abram and Ada Loucks Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Patricia Abild, Marilyn Thordarson; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Keim, George, 88, Bay Port, Mich., died April 12. Spouse: Ida Mishler Keim (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Lucretia Swartzendruber Keim (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Maarsen, Wayne, Charlene Neer, Howard; eight grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Pigeon, Mich.

Klopfenstein, Harry, 68, Tucson, Ariz., died March 9. Spouse: Kate Klopfenstein. Other survivors: children Pat Brackney, Norma Salinger, Mary Irwin, Cindy Frazier, Tom, Philip; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Tucson.

Leister, Franklin, 80, Quakertown, Pa., died April 9 of a brain tumor. Spouse: Elsie Fair Leister. Parents: George and Martha Barndt Leister (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Carol Nase. Funeral: April 11 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

List, Carl, 83, Washington, Ill., died April 6 of cancer. Spouse: Mildred List. Parents: Benjamin and Clara Cooper List (deceased). Foster parents: George and Lavinia Keil (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Elaine Hicks, Donna Wiegel, Gaylene Martin, Neva Rynerson; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Washington.

Miller, John, 91, Berlin, Ohio, died April 17 of cancer. Spouse: Erma Mable Miller (deceased). Parents: Melva and Malinda Mast Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Bruce, James; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Miller, Larry, 48, Goshen, Ind., died April 9 of a heart attack. Spouse: Carolyn Roth Miller. Parents: Perry (deceased) and Kathern Litwiller Miller. Other survivors: children Lana, Lori Ann, Stephanie. Funeral: April 13 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Ratzlaff, James, 60, Enid, Okla., died April 11 from a farm accident. Spouse: Dianna Ratzlaff. Parents: Alvin and Vera Ratzlaff (deceased). Other survivors: children Jamie Koehn, Jason; one grandchild. Funeral: April 14 at Enid.

Roth, Darlene Mae Leis, 51, Exeter, Ont., died April 6. Spouse: Sherman Ray Roth. Parents: Oscar (deceased) and Anna Mae Leis. Other survivors: children Bradley, Michael; one grandchild. Funeral: April 10 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont.

Schmidt, Theodore, 86, Newton, Kan., died March 18. Spouse: Agnes Hiebert Schmidt (deceased). Parents: Henry and Katherina Reimer Schmidt (deceased). Survivors: children Janice McAllister, Bobby; four grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton.

Schmidt, Theresa Frey, 86, Goessel, Kan., died April 11. Spouse: Harlow Schmidt (deceased). Parents: Peter and Agnes Reimer Frey (deceased). Survivors: children Ardith Pankratz, Stan, Harlow, Ava Lipp; 11 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 14 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Shank, Dorothy Smith, 87, Goshen, Ind., died April 1. Spouse: Lauren Shank (deceased). Parents: John and Catherine Smith Smith (deceased). Survivors: children Joan, Susan, Richard, James; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 3 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Short, Alta Wyse, 79, Archbold, Ohio, died April 5. Spouse: Lester Short (deceased). Survivors: children Gerald, Wayne, Ruth Ann Yancey, Gloria Rutt, Ward; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 8 at Pine Grove Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Yoder, Levi, 83, Middlebury, Ind., died April 1. Spouse: Mary Miller Yoder (deceased). Parents: John and Edna Yoder Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children LaVerda McGowen, LuEtta Culp, Ron; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 4 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

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  Send resume to Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576.

- **Shalom Christian Academy** (grades K-12; enrollment 400) is seeking a full-time ***director of development***. Responsibilities include recruitment, public relations and fund raising. SCA is a parent-owned school with an Anabaptist tradition. Send resume to Conrad Swartzentruber, 126 Social Island Road, Chambersburg, PA 17201; email shalom@shalom.k12.pa.us

- **Hesston College** seeks two voluntary service people. Openings available in ***maintenance and food service*** for two individuals or a couple. Opportunity to participate in campus environment. Desired commitment: 9 months to one year at 3/4- to full-time. Available August 1.

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- **West Fallowfield Christian School** needs a ***resource room teacher*** to work with an educational support team serving 15-20 students with learning disabilities, math or language tutoring requirements, or development in study and organizational skills.

  Contact Gary Sensenig, West Fallowfield Christian School, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5001; email gargsen@aol.com

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, accredited K-8, Lancaster, Pa., is seeking teacher applicants for full-time positions: ***middle school science; middle school language arts***, and part-time ***4th- and 5th-grade teachers***, beginning August 1999. Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- ***Technology coordinator*** position available at **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city elementary school. We need a technology coordinator who will teach computer skills and expand the technology program. This is a salaried 10-month position that begins Aug. 16, 1999.

  For a more detailed job description, or to request applications materials, contact Marv Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 300) invites applications for 1999-2000 for the position of ***admissions counselor*** (80% position) and for the following teaching positions: ***sixth grade*** (elementary license; full-time), ***biology/environmental science 9-12*** (full-time, one-year term), ***English 12*** (40% position), and ***German 9-12*** (60% position). Teacher applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president /CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **College Mennonite Church** seeks a full-time ***pastor*** beginning this fall for two of its programs: youth ministry and outreach ministry. This person will provide pastoral care for approximately 100 youth, grades 7-12, and lead the congregation's team of youth sponsors in a multifaceted youth program. This person will also provide pastoral leadership for the outreach ministries of the congregation. Applicants need a warm pastoral heart, interest in working with youth, ability to work as part of a large pastoral team, and vision for leading the congregation in churchwide and community outreach. Applicants need Anabaptist theological grounding, good organizational skills and strong relationship-building abilities.

  Contact Pastoral Search, College Mennonite Church, 1900 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7262; email annd@tln.net

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by Gordon Houser

Visual arts—painting, sculpture, drawing, photography—do not grab headlines very often, yet they have helped form the culture we live in.

Visual arts also have the power to affect us strongly. More than words, images can make us weep at their beauty or make us angry at their depiction of something heinous. We marvel at the perfection of Michelangelo's *David* or shudder at the horror of Picasso's *Guernica*.

Think of the uproar caused by a display of Robert Mapplethorpe photos or by Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*. As a result of these and other works, in 1995 the U.S. Congress voted to cancel all funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) within two years.

"Since it was founded in 1965," writes Robert Hughes in *American Visions: the Epic History of Art in America* (Knopf, 1997), "the NEA had distributed tens of thousands of grants, of which perhaps 20 caused some controversy; but now it was better that the American government should assign no funding to the arts."

America's "culture wars," writes Hughes, an Australian, "do not exist in liberal democracies on the other sides of the Pacific or the Atlantic." These have arisen since the end of the Cold War, as America searches for new enemies to blame for its problems. Hughes writes: "The two PCs—patriotic correctness on the right, political correctness on the left—have … [created] an atmosphere of inflamed accusation in which all moderation is lost."

While the public battles over which art is or is not acceptable, art critics battle over the interpretation of certain artists and their works. One recent book that has helped me understand one of my favorite artists is *At Eternity's Gate: the Spiritual Vision of Vincent van Gogh* by Kathleen Powers Erickson (Eerdmans, 1998, $22).

Erickson counters the view of many critics that van Gogh, who left the church in 1880, also left Christianity behind. She writes: "Although he digressed from his earlier Christian beliefs in search of a synthesis of Christianity with modernity, he never fully abandoned his past faith. It continued to inform his life as well as his art."

Erickson also argues convincingly that van Gogh suffered not from schizophrenia but from "a type of psychomotor epilepsy resulting from a dysfunction in the temporal-lobe region of the brain," which then "produced both episodic behavioral disturbances and reactive depression." The behavioral disturbances led him to cut off his ear, something he never remembered doing, while the depression eventually led him to take his life at age 37.

Above my desk at home is a print of van Gogh's *Crows over the Wheatfield*, one of his last paintings. Erickson offers insight into the images in the painting and what they symbolized for van Gogh. She also discusses his techniques, such as his use of color combinations, and his influences, both artistic and literary. She concludes that the "tendency to represent the infinite in the finite became one of the prevailing signatures of van Gogh's artistic expression."

Although he was poor all his life and received little recognition during his life, van Gogh's paintings now draw huge crowds and command millions of dollars. His art arose out of a vision of God's presence in nature and in the poor, and it speaks powerfully still.

Many Mennonites work in the visual arts, too many to mention. One whose work has graced the pages of *The Mennonite* is Lora Jost, who showed her work at Eastern Mennonite University in March (see photo below, with Scott, her brother and fellow artist).

The recent issue of *Rhubarb* featured on its cover the work of collage artist Peter Martens of Springstein, Man. Ted Lewis, Pawnee Rock, Kan., who has written for *The Mennonite*, has had drawings on display at a restaurant in Newton, Kan.

Arlie Regier sent us a photo of his sculpture *Urban Plow* (at right), which was exhibited at Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan. and at a Kansas City art gallery.

Encourage the artists in your area and surround yourself with artwork that offers glimpses of God's power and beauty.

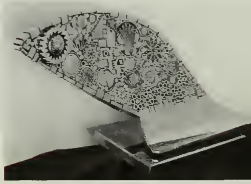
videos

Two delightful videos (both PG) are *Antz*, an animated story of an ant who finds his significance, and *Ever After*, a new version of the Cinderella story.

films

***The Matrix* (R) is drawing crowds. This stylish sci-fi film sets new standards in special effects but also tells an intelligent story involving a messiah figure. However, it mixes a message of love bringing resurrection with the myth of redemptive violence, that we solve our problems by destroying our enemies. It also contains Gothic images (like black trenchcoats) that bring to mind the horrible shootings in Littleton, Colo.**

Arlie Regier



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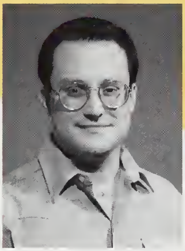

Rich Preheim

A bug's life—and death

For a comic duo whose favorite subject was beer, Doug and Bob McKenzie offered a surprising profundity on human relations. "Don't kill bugs," they preached nearly 20 years ago. "Because someday someone might think of you as a bug, and then where will you be?"

Squashed. Squished. Flattened. Fumigated. Exterminated. Dead.

But what about those people who already see themselves as bugs? People who, for whatever reason, see life as shoes, flyswatters and zappers taking aim at them?

We all know of these sorts of people. We may not consciously equate them with cockroaches or mosquitoes, but we have helped provide other labels to show that they don't quite belong. Outcasts. Misfits. Loners. Losers. Troublemakers. Gangbangers. Trenchcoat Mafia. They are people who feel teased and tormented, belittled and marginalized, excluded and ignored. And they sometimes strike back, lashing out at the insecticidal forces threatening their lives.

That's what happened in Littleton, Colo. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were apparently driven to their brutal assault at Columbine High School because of the real or perceived abuses they received from their fellow students. Survivors of the April 20 rampage quoted Harris and Klebold, members of the school's now infamous Trenchcoat Mafia, as proclaiming, "I'm doing this because people made fun of me last year" and "It's revenge time on jocks for making us outcasts," trying to trade places with their tormentors, making them the bugs.

God's Son while on earth sought out tax collectors, prostitutes and lepers. In that spirit, we need to seek out the Trenchcoat Mafia and other outcasts.

Now 15 people are gone. Squashed. Squished. Flattened. Fumigated. Exterminated. Dead.

What Harris and Klebold did cannot be condemned strongly enough. Well armed and wired to explosives, they mowed down students and teachers, causing unspeakable suffering and grief. They terrorized a school, a community, even a nation. Such action, no matter the impetus, is an obscene contrast to the teachings of Christ, who taught us to repay evil with good.

But it would also be obscene if we continue to treat the memory of Harris and Klebold by disregarding the biblical concepts of love and reconciliation. As a result of their attack, we risk turning the two teenagers from high school outcasts into Hitler-esque killers. By refusing to acknowledge the pair's God-given humanness and society's culpability in their act, we are guilty of demonizing people we don't like and don't understand. And demonizing easily absolves us of responsibility. They were just bad kids, we might say. There was nothing we could do.

The way we treat Harris and Klebold in death offers insights into the way we treat people like them in life. If they are monsters, then we think we don't have to ask forgiveness for treating them as monsters. But they are not just bad people, and there are things that can be done. Regardless of the reasons for the torment and the marginalization, Christians are called to intervene with love. Through God, wondrous things are possible. There is hope.

This is where Doug and Bob McKenzie's message breaks down. We don't treat people as bugs, not because of some misapplication of the Golden Rule—"Don't do unto others as you don't want them to do unto you"—but because we recognize that all of us are creations of the God who invites us, fallen and imperfect, to wholeness. We are to bear witness to that potential for wholeness as offered through Jesus Christ.

Murder is sin. But so are actions, intentional or not, that communicate that certain people are outside some imaginary boundary—alienating actions that can help produce extreme responses such as murder. Teasing, tormenting, belittling, excluding and ignoring are not the ways of God, whose Son while on earth sought out tax collectors, lepers and prostitutes. In that spirit, Christians—who are called to be misfits in their own right—need to seek out the Trenchcoat Mafia and other outcasts, no matter what worldly norms tell us.

So the tragedy of Columbine High School is not a time to blame the perpetrators. Instead, we should mourn for the victims and let them remind us that there is still much to do to show that it is wrong to treat people as bugs.—*rp*

the Mennonite

May 18, 1999

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stop the killing

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

No more silence

After demonstrating May 1-4 in Washington against the School of the Americas (SOA), located at Fort Benning, Ga., I am struggling with the tragedy that our government seems to believe that its only foreign policy tool is a hammer and therefore treats all problems as nails. As tragic as that is, I also struggle to understand why the many people who claim a peaceful and nonviolent tradition and faith are essentially silent on this Cold War dinosaur.

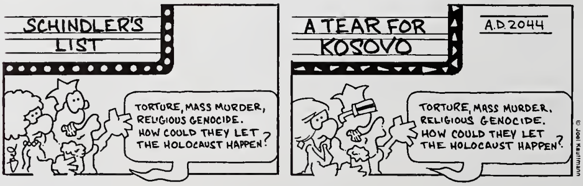
I believe there were close to 2,000 participants demonstrating at the Pentagon. I met folks from California, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington and Canada, as well as people from Mennonite Voluntary Service, Veterans for Peace and Church of the Brethren, Friends, Catholic and Presbyterian churches. The Pentagon's spokesperson said the action was "pretty peaceful, but you can't deface federal property and you can't block sidewalks. … It boiled down to a safety hazard."

There was no mention of the tragic stories (well-documented by the United Nations and congressional investigations) of victims in Latin American countries; no mention of union leaders, educators, health workers, lay or religious people who have been brutalized and martyred; no mention of the well documented stories of SOA graduates who are recognized as political and military leaders and participants in the numerous assassinations, rapes and terrorism that have run rampant in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and others; no question of what threat to our national security this protects us from.

I pledge not to forget and hope that the silence of the majority will somehow be turned—one person, one congregation, one home at a time—into a powerful voice and that we can actually say "No more" and be heard by our government.—*Wes Hare, Richmond, Va.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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TORTURE, MASS MURDER, RELIGIOUS GENOCIDE. HOW COULD THEY LET THE HOLOCAUST HAPPEN?
A TEAR FOR KOSOVO
A.D. 2044
TORTURE, MASS MURDER, RELIGIOUS GENOCIDE. HOW COULD THEY LET THE HOLOCAUST HAPPEN?
© Joel Kauffmann

Pass it on

I really appreciated the editorial on "Outbursts of Love and Good Deeds" (April 27). I had just been reading *Random Acts of Kindness* and wondering what a better world this would be if people thought about doing those kinds of acts more often. I believe that your challenge is very appropriate and would help in bringing joy to those around us.

I also noticed that when you received those special gifts or blessings, your "first response was to find someone with whom to share this joy and this love." It seems as if the way to "encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds" is for each of us to participate in them, thereby passing on that desire. *—Shanti Martin, Akron Pa.*

I appreciate reading the editorials. And the April 27 one really caught my eye. The theme of love and good deeds speaks to all of us. Thanks.*—Irene Hershberger, Sugarcreek, Ohio*

Figuring it out

In his letter in the April 27 issue, David Clymer writes that "32,000 children die each day due to lack of nutrition and vaccines," that "1.2 million preborn children are killed [by abortion] … each year" and that "far more children daily suffer violent death from the abortionist … than die of natural causes."

If Clymer considers lack of nutrition and vaccines natural causes, then by my calculation, his claim contradicts his own figures by a factor of 10. I don't know his sources and don't at this time dispute his statistics; I merely point out that his conclusion is inconsistent with his own hypothesis.—*Keith Neufeld, North Newton, Kan.*

School ways

The eloquent articles in the April 27 *The Mennonite* present two viewpoints on schooling—one emphasizing the importance of teaching one's own children, the other describing the service opportunies of public school teaching. I would speak for the challenge of involvement and participation in public schools as Christian parents, teachers, school board members and community leaders. Rather than abandoning the schools to those who lack Christian values, we can make a difference.

To Eddy Hall ("Three Rs and an L"), I make this observation about the lack of scheduled school hours: If the public observes home-schooled children roaming the streets or shop-

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y readers say

ping with a parent during "normal school hours," this makes for negative public relations. You offer a glowing account of peer socialization and of academic excellence. May they continue for the next 12 years.—*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

An expanded vision

As my husband and I recently traveled home from another Connecting Families weekend, we shared together the rich experiences we enjoyed with fellow pilgrims on this journey. Connecting Families is a group of Mennonite and Brethren people from the United States and Canada who have lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered family members. We meet together with our LGBT brothers, sisters and children to share our stories and to bring healing and hope to each other.

It is a safe place to be who we are and to worship God, who loves us all dearly. It is one of the places on earth where we feel nearest to heaven. One of our dearest treasures is to be part of this loving and caring group of believers.

It is our deep desire that the church we love will be able to expand its vision of healing and hope to include all people who are drawn by God into the family of faith. Jesus said, "No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father, who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day" (John 6:44).—*Roberta Showalter Kreider, Sellersville, Pa.*

Gone liberal

I have for some years begun to realize that some Mennonites are going liberal (unbelief?) and with educated traditions of men. The liberalism and doubt can be seen when they compromise with the world, like accepting the doubtful place of women, sodomy, greed and power.—*Wayne Kratzer, Elyria, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Columbine conversations between a daughter and a father

by Angie and
John Paul Lederach

Angie: A couple of days after the April 20 shooting ended, Willie said a good friend from Columbine High School called, crying hard. Willie is a friend in my choir at Nederland High School. Our school is up in the mountains outside Denver in the district that borders Jefferson County. We were shook up when we heard what was happening in Littleton, but it hit home even more as we listened to Willie on Friday, April 23. His friend had spent most of that tragic day in the library under a desk. While she survived, one of her closest classmates, Rachel Scott, was killed. The blood from the shot spattered onto her shirt, and she didn't want to take it off because, as she told Willie, it was all she had to remember Rachel. She felt guilty that she made it out alive but had to leave under those library desks friends who never made it.

John: Once the news reached us, Wendy, my wife, and I sat glued to the television, watching the slow evolution of images in disbelief. A local high school, the reporters kept saying, had turned into a killing ground. It suddenly felt too local. Contingents of SWAT teams and police ushered panic-stricken kids, using their guns to protect them from guns while fire fighters and ambulances whisked the wounded off to emergency rooms. The look of parents' faces was overwhelming. They ran wildly in from cars parked some distance away or gathered at the elementary school, holding their breath at the posting of recent evacuees. At times the faces exploded with relief and tears as they found their own, while for others it went on eternally. They waited with a feeling their world was falling apart. It was. I found myself fidgeting, waiting for the school bus to arrive at 4 p.m. with our two and resisting an urge to go get them out of school.

> We can't push some people out like they are too weird. It hurts and sometimes may just push them over the edge. … We do that too easily in every school, hanging out just with kids who are like us and keeping distant from anyone we think isn't quite right.—*Angie Lederach*

Angie: We talked a lot with our teachers and each other about how horrible it was. Many of my friends knew people from Columbine, and it scared us. We felt a certain comfort in knowing that our school was smaller and we all knew each other. But we also knew that making fun of others just because they are different was common in our school. We just can't do that anymore, we said. We can't push some people out like they are too weird. It hurts and sometimes may just push them over the edge. We told each other we need to watch what we say, who we laugh at and who feels left out. We do that too easily in every school, hanging out just with kids who are like us and keeping distant from anyone we think isn't quite right. And when it comes to kids talking about violence, even if it is supposed to be a joke, it needs to be taken more seriously. We need to do something that can keep this from ever happening again, and a good place to start is to be more aware of what is going on around us.

John: Late on Tuesday, darkness fell, and the gunshots stopped. Most of the kids were out. Those that remained inside would never make it. One time I felt tears run down my face was hearing the short, live interview with Isaiah Shoels' father. "No, I don't know anything," he said, "but at this late hour it doesn't look good. From everything the others said he has two counts against him: He is black and he is an athlete. I feel like I am in a dream and I cannot wake up." By morning it was confirmed that Isaiah was dead. Words and phrases numbed me: "Thirty pipe bombs." "Hitler's birthday." "Do you believe in God?" "Pray for us." Then for the first time I saw school photos of the two boys who pulled the triggers. It took my breath. They looked so normal, just like us, just like Angie's friends. What have we birthed? I thought. A TV reporter passed along a tidbit that one of those boys' parents had not gone home but had driven aimlessly through the night in the streets of their neighborhood. That left me feeling a sadness as deep as I can remember.

Angie: My classmates say parents are asking a lot about their clothes and music. Internet and Web sites are being watched more closely. Although I do not like it when my parents are being nosy and occasionally look over my shoulder when I'm chatting with friends on the Internet, I have to say I'm glad they care enough about me to make sure I'm not into

Correction: In the poem "The Prodigal" (May 4, p. 6), the third line should read: "when she walked out the door." We apologize for the error.

bad things. Too many parents have become too laid back about the stuff we can get into. Our school and community did a lot to remember and mourn for Columbine. We had a memorial service on Sunday at our community center. It was also a time to discuss things that could change. Our school has a donation box for families of those who died, and they passed out blue ribbons and stickers in remembrance of the victims. We made paper cranes and a banner that were sent to the park near the school to show our support. It may not be much, and it can't change anything, but it was important to do it together and to remember.

John: The day after the shootings, the droning of images did not stop. They were only interrupted by the hourly updates from the police and statements from the Colorado governor and the White House. President Clinton's words stuck with me. As I recall them, he said we need to develop a capacity in our children to tolerate differences and resolve conflict peacefully, and we need to do that by setting an example as parents and adults. "I agree," I said out loud. "Let's start now and in Kosovo." I felt tired. I felt so tired of seeing guns and hearing arguments about guns—especially guns in the hands of kids I have seen—from Mogadishu, Bogotá and Belfast to New York, Los Angeles and Littleton. I am sick of it. In the days that followed, music spawned and flowed, people found each other and turned toward God. The community rose and with it a sense of life. And learning.

Angie: Willie missed school part of this week. He was with his friends at the funerals in Littleton.

John: Today they buried Isaiah Shoels.

Angie: We have three simple ideas to share.

John: Maybe they are requests, maybe confessions. God is our rock and shield. True security is rooted in God and the quality of divine love reflected in our relationships. In the end, our safety does not lie in the size or quantity of our weapons or from the protection of those people using them for good or bad reasons. It lies ultimately with the quality of God's love in our relationships, even with those who hate us.

Pastors, elders, Sunday school teachers and youth leaders, show us it is possible to love each other even when we disagree and even when we hear things we wish we had never heard.—*Angie Lederach*

Angie: Parents of America, or at least parents of Mennonite America, show us that you can live and relate without weapons, even when they are present around you.

John: Let us practice what we preach. We should endeavor at all levels of the adult world, especially from our most visible leadership, to show that tolerance, dialogue and patience can prevail in responding nonviolently to open conflicts. We cannot expect the straightforward eyes and ears of teenagers to follow our words and not our actions. We cannot expect to achieve in Columbine or Harrisonburg High what we do not commit to doing in Colombia, Kosovo or Sudan.

Angie: President Clinton, make us believers. Show us that you can do in Washington and Kosovo what you are asking us to do in Columbine.

John: Let at least our Mennonite congregations be true sanctuaries where it is possible to live safely together in diversity. We cannot expect our children to deal with differences, diversity and even confrontation in their schools if we cannot do it in our churches.

In the end, our safety does not lie in the size or quantity of our weapons or from the protection of those people using them for good or bad reasons. It lies ultimately with the quality of God's love in our relationships, even with those who hate us.—*John Paul Lederach*

Angie: Pastors, elders, Sunday school teachers and youth leaders, show us it is possible to love each other even when we disagree and even when we hear things we wish we had never heard.

Angie Lederach is a high school freshman and her father, John Paul, teaches conflict transformation at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. The Lederachs are on a one-year sabbatical in Colorado.

Lessons from Littleto

Ten risk factors in the epidemic of youth violence and what we can do

by Mark Chupp

Thirteen young people are shot each day, accidentally or intentionally, most likely between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Unfortunately, a gun is not like a baseball bat or even a knife—it only takes a split second to fire from a distance and is extremely lethal.

If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.—Matthew 18:6

The killings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., tragically provide one of those moments when our country comes together to reflect. But to understand these killings, we must move beyond a law and order perspective. It must be seen as part of a trend of increased teenage violence. Increased surveillance and security in our schools is not the answer alone. These are not outside enemies but our own children.

Physician Deborah Prothrow-Stith suggests that we see youth violence as a public health epidemic. A public health approach moves us toward prevention instead of punishment. Just as we now link lung cancer to smoking, public health can help us discover the risk factors that contribute to increased youth violence. Ten risk factors are worth noting:

1. Increasing numbers of youth feel left out of social activities and are ridiculed by mainstream groups. The two killers at Columbine told witnesses, "This is for making fun of us last year." A tough exterior may simply be a mask to cover the deep feelings of pain and loss.

2. Weakened family structure means fewer adults available to help teens navigate safely to adulthood. Whether single- or two-parent families, all too often parents are too busy with work or their own adult activities to be able to connect to their children. The drive for prosperity has driven a wedge in the family dinner table, eliminating the place to help teenagers gain spiritual direction and work out their frustrations.

3. Countercultural groups serve as an alternative family and place of acceptance. These teens, like so many others, turned to the one place where they could find acceptance and a release for their hatred and revenge. Whether they are formal gangs, an Internet network or just a ring of friends, countercultural groups are often united by their sense of rejection from mainstream society. Many of these youth have not found the church to be a place of acceptance either.

4. A new popular spirit of meanness is sweeping the country, where children and adults are more likely to treat a complete stranger or authority figure with disrespect. The news and talk shows present a lopsided view of the world as cruel, public officials as corrupt and strangers as out to get you. Unfortunately, the measures people take to protect themselves or get even in such a world often create more extreme conditions. Road rage is only one example.

5. The desensitization and glorification of violence as entertainment on television, in movies and music, while not new, have reached an all-time low. The bloodiest, most gruesome parts of movies no longer bring screams of horror but the greatest cheers and laughter from the youthful audience. The heroes are those who use violence to survive to the end. The impact is chilling as Columbine High School students reported that the killers laughed as they shot students.

6. First-person shooter video games teach the mechanics of killing and provide rewards for learning to act on impulse. These games isolate killing as the only solution and do not include the human and social impact. "Killologist" David Grossman argues that we are taking the same methods used in the military to indiscriminately teach children to overcome the innate resistance to kill and to become extremely accurate. The boy who shot students coming out of a student prayer meeting in Paducah, Ky., shot with nearly unprecedented accuracy by hitting eight students with only eight shots. He had never fired a real gun before that morning.

7. The fascination with and easy access to guns and bomb-making technology combines the desire for revenge and inner preparedness to kill with the capability of carrying it out. The majority of teenagers in this country know how to get a gun quickly. Teens say they carry guns because they are cool and offer protection. Thirteen young people are shot each day, accidentally or intentionally, most likely between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. Unfortunately, a gun is not like a baseball bat or even a knife—it only takes a split second to fire from a distance and is extremely lethal. With the advent of the Internet, anyone can quickly learn to make homemade bombs.

8. The news media portrayal of violence only compounds the problem. Real-crime TV shows blur the lines between fact and fiction. News today tries to entertain with one violent story after another, eliminating any resolution of current or past incidents. Driven by ratings, they strive for the

starkest portrayal. The coverage of the Littleton shootings is no exception, where networks raced to show the most graphic footage. The two killers have also become overnight heroes among marginalized youth.

9.Racism and a general lack of tolerance for those who are perceived as different are on the increase. The Columbine boys chose Hitler's birthday for their attack. White supremacy and glorification of Nazi Germany is not restricted to Goths or one type of music. The Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacy groups are actively recruiting among high school students throughout the North and South. The rollback of affirmative action laws and signs of resegregation often send a message to young people that prejudice is a natural way to protect yourself and your own kind.

10. The militarization of our society and the government's use of smart bombs to solve political and social problems reinforce the use of violence by young people. This is especially true for males, who are taught early on to act tough and end up committing the vast majority of all violence. The ultimate irony occurred when President Clinton first ordered increased bombing of Yugoslavia and then urged the country to teach kids not to use violence to solve conflict. Sanitized aerial bombing with little risk to U.S. or NATO soldiers promotes the notion that if you have enough firepower you can kill without being hurt.

Given this array of influences, it is no wonder that our young people have lost their moral compass to guide them through life. As younger children commit more violence, we must ask ourselves if we have created these stumbling blocks. Children grow up unable to separate reality from fantasy.

We are now learning that those around the boys who killed at Columbine did not act on the warning signs. There were threats, Internet postings, even a video of a simulated school shooting, repeated calls to the police and signs at home of bombs and guns. Will we as a society also ignore the many warning signs this and other tragic incidents represent? Do we have the public will to say enough?

Ironically, the day after the shootings in Littleton, billboards advertising smoking came down across the country because society believes such ads have an adverse effect on the health of young people. Billboards went up in their place promoting anti-smoking messages directed at teens. Just as we do not wait until someone develops lung cancer to act, we should not wait until a youth shows signs of being violent to intervene. We must work at prevention, reducing the risk factors that make young people prone to violence.

There is good news. We have ample evidence of the impact of the above risk factors. We also have an array of choices for reducing these factors. Like smoking, we can begin by restricting the advertising and showing of violence to adults. We can also create a clear public position that guns are lethal and a danger to society. We have the most guns and the highest violence rates in the world. There are clear steps that can be taken to reduce guns and all 10 factors.

We know that an epidemic can be thwarted by stopping the spread of the infectious agent or by creating resistance to it. There are many protective factors that buffer young people exposed to the risk factors so they do not become violent. That is why people exposed to the same factors behave differently.

As Mennonites, we are privileged to know how to build community and have a great storehouse of protective factors. We are known worldwide for our efforts in restorative justice, community development, disaster relief, peace building, conflict transformation and mediation. Our history of persecution can also help us understand those who feel ridiculed by society. What would happen if we turned the church's energy and gifts to this crisis, just as we have in the past after an international crisis? We quickly collected millions of dollars and hundreds of volunteers for relief in Central America after Hurricane Mitch. May God grant us the courage and will to respond to the call at home.

Mark Chupp lives in Cleveland and teaches peace, justice and conflict transformation at Goshen (Ind.) College.

As Mennonites, we are privileged to have a great storehouse of protective factors. We are known worldwide for our efforts in restorative justice, community development, disaster relief, peace building, conflict transformation and mediation.

Kosovar refugees have set up schools for their children .

MCC photo by William Rei

The tide of refugees from war

by Kristin Oberholtzer

More than 300,000 Kosovar refugees are now registered in Albania, with more arriving daily. Allen Umble, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) worker in Lezhe, reports, "The refugee situation is overwhelming this fragile country. Yet Albanians are reaching out and helping where they can."

The Mennonite congregation at Lezhe is working with two other evangelical churches to organize help for a specific number of refugees in Lezhe, says Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) worker Paul Kropf. The churches are working with about 190 Kosovars, with direction from the Albania Encouragement Project (AEP) and from the Albanian Evangelical Brotherhood (VUSH), Albania's national alliances of evangelical mission agencies and churches, respectively.

Paul says, "When the first refugees began to flood into Lezhe, we were encouraged to see some of the youth from the church helping in whatever way they could, without us organizing help. Different families were preparing food, others were inviting refugees to take showers in their homes, some were and are doing laundry for refugee families."

> The realities of trying to feed and house this many refugees is staggering. Yet we continue to seek to proceed in the Spirit of Christ.
>
> *—Dan and Melike Smeenge*

In Tirana, VMBM worker Tom Yoder reports a similar response: "We and others are bringing families to our home to shower, shave, have a good meal and just relax awhile."

Tom and Karen Yoder also assist with AEP/VUSH relief efforts in a Tirana sports complex. "The welcome center operates around the clock, with evangelical Christians working together to supply and serve food," says Tom. Their work goes beyond material aid, he reports. "We are brainstorming things to do with folks of all ages who have nothing but time and haunting memories on their hands."

EMM workers Dan and Melike Smeenge report from Lushnje: "The realities of trying to feed and house this many refugees is staggering. Yet we continue to seek to proceed in the Spirit of Christ. Each person Jesus met he responded to with compassion, individually, with the full love of God. We realize this limits us personally to only meeting the needs of several hundred, but we are thankful for the network that has sprung up equipping many to do the same."

The Smeenges say, "Our lives have fallen into the routine of looking for new refugees in the morning and delivering food in the afternoons, then searching the shortwave radio for news in the evenings."

Tom Yoder says, "The 'unconfirmed' atrocities are really happening. Everyone who listens to these folks hears the same kinds of accounts, and we see the shock, horror and revulsion on their faces." Tom calls the Serb violence "a systematic effort to not only expel the Albanian people but to erase their culture and crush their spirit."

"We look at the situation of having 300,000 more hungry people in a country without work, and we wonder how long the Albanians can continue, realistically, to be the gracious hosts they are," say the Smeenges. AEP/ VUSH reports that Albania's economy is weak, but there has been no obvious sign of political instability in the country, contrary to Western projections only months ago.

"Our prayers at this moment are for God's hand to rest over this place with movements that bring hope and grace and prevent sickness and chaos and an eruption of frustration at the whole situation," the Smeenges say. "We also pray to be able to maintain relationships and build friendships that lead to questions of faith with these people."

The church planting and development work in Albania is a partnership between VMBM (in Harrisonburg, Va.) and EMM (in Salunga, Pa.) and is registered in Albania as Albanian Mennonite Missions Foundation. Five families and three single workers serve with AMMF.

Kristin Oberholtzer works for Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa.

Contributions for refugee relief work may be sent to:

- Albanian Refugee Fund, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Oak Land & Brandt Blvd., Salunga, PA 17538
- Kosovar/Albania Refugee Fund, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, 901 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802
- Mennonite Central Committee, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500

A call to peace in the Balkans

A Mennonite Central Committee statement against the violence in Yugoslavia

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.—Matthew 5:9

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) asks all Christians to respond with compassion to the war taking place in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the province of Kosovo. We are horrified by the attacks of the police and military of FRY on its own people and villages, which have forced many to flee to neighboring provinces and countries. We are also horrified by the bombing by the NATO forces, which is not only out of proportion to the problem but has contributed to the humanitarian crisis.

We are reminded of Matthew's admonition calling Christians to make peace. Military violence applied to solve tensions between ethnic communities carries no blessing at all and leads to generations of anger and suspicion. Military violence applied to stop ethnic cleansing seems equally shortsighted. MCC calls on the leaders of FRY, NATO and the Kosova Liberation Army to refrain from additional violent military action and to pursue vigorously a negotiated settlement using diplomatic and nonmilitary mechanisms.

MCC has supported program in the FRY since 1991. We have been involved with relief, education and international exchange activities and through these have worked with Christian (Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant) and Muslim people. All these people are made in the image of God. It is our hope they will again be able to take up the blessed peacemaker vocations they are called to. MCC is committed to standing with these sisters and brothers during the current crisis and to providing assistance for the long process of rebuilding lives and re-establishing communities.

The path to reconciled lives and peaceful communities has been broken due to a number of circumstances. These include:

- the escalation of the level of violence and other violations of human rights during this period;
- the failure to respect the role of and involve the United Nations in the negotiations;
- the demands for an agreement to a peace settlement in Rambouillet, France, that was not reached by consensus or adequate representation of the parties and peoples involved.

We believe peace in this region will come about as residents are given the time and opportunity to engage in the resolution of the issues that have become barriers to peace and justice. MCC will stand with all people in the Balkans and support those who seek peace and reconciliation. As first steps toward peace, we ask:

- that all people of faith pray for God's forgiveness for all violence done, for all missed opportunities to seek peace and for those who face each day with fear;
- that humanitarian agencies increase efforts to meet the emergency needs of all the people caught up in this crisis;
- that the United Nations Security Council pursue vigorously a peaceful settlement of the conflict and call for a cease-fire by all parties to the conflict to provide time to search for such a settlement;
- that the military and police forces of FRY cease all aggressive activity toward the innocent and defenseless people of Kosovo;
- that NATO cease the bombing campaign.

Students at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., initiated a campus and community appeal in response to the plight of Kosovar refugees. Prior to and during commencement weekend April 24-25, $1,722 came in. Some students remained on campus after commencement to help with the collection and to assemble 80 refugee kits. The money and kits will go to Mennonite Central Committee.—*Jim Bishop*

Neither rain nor cold …

Students from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and others from the area participate in a 17-mile walk April 25 to raise awareness of the plight of Kosovar Albanian refugees. Unhampered by rain and cool temperatures, 45 walkers participated, with 18 going the full distance. Bethel senior Katelyn Hubert had the idea for the walk and did most of the planning. One part of the walk was to encourage monetary donations to Mennonite Central Committee's refugee assistance projects, which include refugee kits for people in the Balkans.—*Carla Reimer*

Bethel College photo by Matt Krehbiel

Ex-refugee connects Ethiopians, Germans

Shimeless Retta, son of a wealthy Catholic family in Ethiopia, fled his homeland in 1977, after the communists took control. After four years in Sudan, he stopped in Germany en route to the United States.

He never got to the United States. In Germany, Retta found a wife, Mennonitism and a mission.

Retta and his German-born wife, Yotta, joined a Mennonite Brethren congregation in Warendorf. The rest of the congregation had recently emigrated from the Soviet Union.

Since making his first trip to Ethiopia in 1994, Retta has been introduced to the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia. With the support of the Warendorf congregation, Retta has made regular trips to his homeland. He has helped build churches, preached and started a child-sponsorship program. Last year Retta and his wife started Ethiopian Gospel Service, a full-time ministry. *—MWC News Service*

MDS plans long-term tornado response

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is anticipating long-term responses in the Oklahoma City and Wichita, Kan., areas following the deadly and destructive series of tornadoes that ripped through the region on May 3.

MDS workers have been cleaning in some of the affected communities but anticipate starting to rebuild in both states later this month.

In Oklahoma, MDS teams have been organized to clean up in Mulhall, Dover and Bridge Creek, an area hit by an F-5 tornado, the strongest ranking on the Fujita scale. MDS organizers also hope to respond in other communities around Oklahoma City.

"Towns are devastated," says Bill Mast, Oklahoma MDS unit chair. "There are homes that are completely destroyed with nothing left but the foundation. ... We told the American Red Cross and the Oklahoma Civil Emergency Operations that MDS will be in it for the long haul."

MDS officials are looking to establish project headquarters in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, which would allow access to a number of surrounding communities. The storms in central Oklahoma killed 41 people and caused nearly $1 billion in damage.

MDS is also planning on a long-term presence in Wichita. Cleanup continues in Haysville, located immediately south of Wichita. Locally, six people were killed, including a 1-month-old boy, and damage is estimated at more than $140 million.*—MCC News Service*

Hesston returns storm help

HAYSVILLE, Kan.—They've been there before. That's why six buses full of Hesston (Kan.) High School students and faculty made the trip to Haysville on May 6 to serve with Mennonite Disaster Service following a devastating May 3 tornado.

Hesston had a similar experience on March 13, 1990, when a powerful twister tore through the city.

"We got an awful lot of help when we needed it," says John Waltner, a Hesston High School teacher and organizer of the trip. "So these kids were glad to go and help."

Waltner is also Hesston's mayor and a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.*—Newton Kansan*

Teachers in China safe as embassy bombing generates anti-American demonstrations

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Americans teaching at Chinese universities with China Educational Exchange (CEE) are reported safe but keeping a low profile following NATO's accidental attack on China's embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

All cities where CEE teachers are located have had anti-American demonstrations, says CEE director Myrrl Byler, but no teachers have experienced threats or have requested to leave their assignments.

"Most of our teachers are staying around campus and not finding their way to the city where there are demonstrations," he says.

CEE, an inter-Mennonite program, has 35 people in about a dozen locations. Two-thirds of the participants are from the United States.

Byler, who has been in contact with almost all CEE workers since the May 8 embassy bombing, says the schools and their students feel responsible for the teachers' security.

"The general sentiment is the Chinese students are able to distinguish between the acts of individuals and the acts of governments," Byler says.

General Conference Mennonite Church staff members Ron Flaming and Melanie Zuercher, on a previously scheduled visit to Asia, arrived in Beijing on May 8. In communication with family and with GCMC headquarters, Flaming, executive director of the Commission on Overseas Mission, and Zuercher, GCMC News Service editor, reported being fine but are avoiding the area of the U.S. embassy, where protests have taken place. No changes in Flaming and Zuercher's itinerary are planned; they are scheduled to leave China on May 18 to return to the United States.*—Rich Preheim*

MCC broadens help for Balkans refugees

Albania, Bosnia and Montenegro receive assistance

AKRON, Pa.—One hundred fourteen tons of Mennonite Central Committee relief food arrived in Montenegro earlier this month, part of MCC's ongoing material assistance for refugees in the Balkans.

The food—oil, wheat, flour and beans—was unloaded May 3-4, to be distributed by the Orthodox Church to some of the 63,000 ethnic Albanians who have fled Kosovo to seek safety in neighboring Montenegro.

The influx of refugees has created growing tensions in Montenegro, says Hansuli Gerber, MCC Europe program director. "Alleviating people's needs will help stablize the situation, and a more stable situation will help prevent civil war," he wrote in a May 5 email.

The shipment of MCC food, donated through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, sailed from Canada to the Netherlands and from there was trucked to Montenegro.

Meanwhile, MCC is expanding its efforts in other areas of the region:

- Each week through fall, a 40-foot container of refugee kits—about 1,800 kits per container—will be sent via ship to Albania. To meet the need, MCC has requested 30,000 kits. MCC workers Dan and Evanna Hess of Lancaster, Pa., have been in Albania since last month, coordinating the agency's response. MCC will spend at least $1 million for food, bedding and other necessities for Kosovars. Efforts will focus on helping refugees not in camps but staying with Albanian families. Albania is hosting some 423,000 Kosovar refugees.
- In Bosnia, MCC is providing food and other supplies to 1,700 refugees who have arrived in Sarajevo since NATO bombing of Yugoslavia started in March. MCC will also distribute refugee kits assembled by Swiss Mennonites.
- MCC is looking to begin work in Macedonia, just south of Kosovo and adjacent to Albania. About a third of the Macedonian population is Albanian. Since the onset of violence in Kosovo, 241,000 Kosovars fled to Macedonia.

While MCC is providing assistance to Kosovars throughout the Balkans, MCC Canada is searching for Mennonites to sponsor some of the 5,000 refugees coming to Canada. The first refugees arrived earlier this month and will spend four to six weeks at military bases in eastern Canada.

"During that time, it is hoped that sponsors across Canada can be found to take these people in," says Ed Wiebe, refugee coordinator for MCC in Manitoba. "Mennonite churches are asked to assist with sponsorship."

The federal government will pay for food, lodging, clothes and furnishings for as long as two years.

In other developments, a six-member Eastern Mennonite Missions Youth Evangelism Team returned to Albania May 2 after a month-long hiatus in Italy due to the unstable situation.
—MCC, MCC Canada and EMM news services

MCC photo by William Reimer

Makeshift homes, such as this one in the Albanian capital of Tirana, have sprung up in tent cities across the country as thousands of Kosovar refugees flood across the border. Thousands more have been welcomed into the homes of Albanian families. They are the focus of Mennonite Central Committee's work in Albania.

Small church creates great support

OMAHA, Neb.—New Hope Mennonite Church is a 5-year-old congregation of about two dozen people. But their efforts on behalf of Kosovar refugees have produced more than 500 refugee kits for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

New Hope in April sent letters to places of worship and parochial schools in Omaha, inviting them to help collect refugee kits. The goal was 250 kits. Several grocery stores offered discounts on items purchased for the kits, and one store volunteered its parking lot as a collection point.

Then media coverage helped spread the word beyond the religious community. Businesses, scout troops, university departments and schools, as well as individuals, all expressed interest. "It became clear to us that people were looking for a way to respond to news reports about the desperate situation of the refugees," says New Hope pastor Susan Janzen.

By the end of the day on May 1, more than 500 kits had been collected, plus boxes of other supplies and some $2,000, all for MCC. "There was a steady stream of cars all day, from 9 to 3," says New Hope member Jan Miller.

Alberta church faces more possible action

CALGARY—Having already lost its Mennonite Brethren (MB) membership, South Calgary Inter-Mennonite Fellowship's status in the Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) will also be scrutinized this year.

South Calgary, as a member of the Supportive Congregations Network (SCN) of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, accepts noncelibate homosexuals as congregational members. As a result, the Alberta MB Conference in March voted to revoke Calgary's membership. The action passed with a 90 percent vote.

South Calgary had been one of a handful of North American Mennonite congregations to hold three affiliations. But the MC and CMC memberships will also be questioned. The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, a CMC area conference, this summer will conduct a series of regional gatherings on homosexuality. The purpose is for congregations to be able to listen to other congregations which hold differing viewpoints for each "to understand clearly why we believe what we believe," says conference minister Ray Landis.

Northwest Conference, an MC area conference, will hold a special conference session this fall to address South Calgary's membership.

South Calgary has been a publicly welcoming congregation of noncelibate homosexuals since 1996. Discussions with the MC, CMC and MB area conferences began in April 1998. —*Canadian Mennonite* with Rich Preheim

The negative power of Christianity

Serving a congregation on the Hopi Reservation in northern Arizona, Cyndi and Russ Toews try not to identify themselves as Christian.

Not that they are downplaying their beliefs. The Toews simply recognize the power and history of a word. For many Hopi, Christianity is linked with oppression.

"We try not to refer to ourselves as Christian," says Russ, who pastors Bacavi (Ariz.) Mennonite Church, "but as followers of Christ."

Since moving from Greeley, Colo., to Bacavi two years ago, the Toewses have seen the congregation grow. Other than Cyndi, Russ and their three sons, Sunday worship used to have only two or three people. Attendance now is around 20 and has reached 30.—*GCMC News Service*

Photo by June Krehbiel

Ringing for the victims

Eric Cook-Wiens, a Bethel College senior from Cedar Falls, Iowa, rings the school bell during a May 5 ceremony honoring the students and teachers who died at last month's shooting in Littleton, Colo., and other sites of school violence. The bell ringing was part of a "Teach-In on School Violence" hosted by Bethel on its North Newton, Kan., campus, which drew 175 people.

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New Canadian college gets new campus

WINNIPEG—A new joint venture in Mennonite college education has purchased the former campus of the Manitoba School for the Deaf from the provincial government for $3.5 million (Cdn.).

The campus, home to the school for the deaf until 1996, is located across the street from Canadian Mennonite Bible College, one of three Winnipeg schools in the new Mennonite College Federation. The others are Concord College and Menno Simons College. The CMBC campus and the new campus will be connected.

The federation will take possession of the property this fall. Until September, the campus will serve as the headquarters for the 1999 Pan Am Games. Following renovations and construction, the new campus is expected to be operational in September 2000.

After several years of discussion, the federation was approved last year. Classes will begin this fall, held on the three current campuses until moving to the new facilities.

Bethel College to graduate 122

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Longtime Bluffton (Ohio) College instructor and administrator Donald L. Pannabecker will be the commencement speaker at Bethel College's 106th graduation ceremony on May 23. Degrees will be granted to 122 graduates.

Pannabecker retired in 1997 after 33 years at Bluffton. He taught religion and philosophy and held the positions of registrar, provost, dean and vice president, among others.

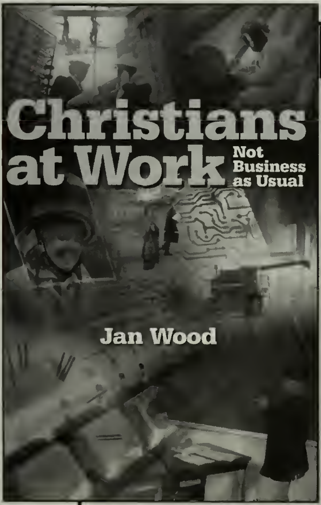
EMS professor named development director

HARRISONBURG, Va.—N. Gerald Shenk, Eastern Mennonite Seminary professor of church and society, has been named director of seminary development, responsible for soliciting funds for the school.

Shenk began his position part-time on March 1 and will assume full-time duties on July 1. He plans to continue to teach at least one course a year and to remain coordinator of the seminary's annual School for Leadership Training.

by the way ...

To buy their house in Goshen, Ind., in 1938, Harold S. and Elizabeth Bender borrowed $5,000 from the Mennonite Board of Education endowment fund.—*Harold S. Bender* by Al Keim



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—*Wally Kroeker, Editor,* The Marketplace, *Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA)*

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Events

"Streams in the Desert" retreat for families with members with long-term mental illness, June 4-6, Bluffton (Ohio) College. Sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Speaker: John Toews. Contact Paul Leichty, 888-284-3118 or PDLeichty@aol.com

Births

Gusler, Sydney Nicole, March 3, to Jay and Nicole (Clymer) Gusler, Sumner, Wash.

Herr, Amy Elizabeth and Emily Elizabeth (twins), March 10, to Dan and Melinda Herr, Ephrata, Pa.

Landis, Andrew Keith, March 2, to Brenda (Yoder) and Keith Landis, West Liberty, Ohio.

Miller, Garrett Lee, March 6, to David and Trina (Steiner) Miller, Plain City, Ohio.

Marriages

Chupp/Johnson: Carla Chupp, Mishawaka, Ind., and Ryan Johnson, Mishawaka, April 24 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Frampton/Litwiller: Howard Frampton, Morton, Ill., and Kathy Litwiller, Morton, April 24 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Holmes/Ray: Dorothea Holmes, Spring City, Pa., and Ken Ray, Bryn Mawr, Pa., April 24 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City.

King/Sauder: Wendel King, Atglen, Pa., and Candace Sauder, Lancaster, Pa., April 18 at Neffsville Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Martin/Zimmerman: Lyndell Martin, Lititz, Pa., and Bryan Zimmerman, Lititz, April 24 at Neffsville Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Meyer/Sonius: Jeff Meyer, Wayland, Iowa, and Lisa Sonius, Crystal Lake, Iowa, April 17.

Deaths

Byler, Glen, 73, Goshen, Ind., died April 20. Spouse: Lois Garber Byler. Parents: Thomas and Nancy Schrock Byler (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Tracy. Funeral: April 24 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Erb, Mildred Bender, 77, Tavistock, Ont., died March 16. Spouse: Lloyd Erb (deceased). Parents: Peter and Lydia Bender (deceased). Survivors: children Peter, Roy, David; four grandchildren. Funeral: March 18 at Tavistock.

Kauffman, Mary Bohn, 98, Goshen, Ind., died April 2. Spouse: Rollo Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Henry and Rosina Zoss Bohn (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret Sutter, Rosina Litwiller, Robert, Richard; 14 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 6 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Leichty, Dallas, 56, Wayland, Iowa, died April 19 of a machine accident. Spouse: Wilma Graber Roth Leichty. Parents: Leonard and Ruth Swartzendruber Leichty. Other survivors: stepchildren Steve Roth, Carmine Boal, Rhonda Taylor; seven grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Wayland.

Magdefrau, Waunita Kauffman, 66, Wayland, Iowa, died April 19 of cancer. Spouse: James Magdefrau. Parents: John and Katie Schlatter Kauffman. Other survivors: stepdaughter Sandra Bear; 2 grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Wayland.

Martin, Maryann Hoffman Good, 88, Cambridge, Ont., died March 9. Spouse: (1st) George Good (deceased); (2nd) Abraham Martin (deceased). Parents: Menno and Susanah Eby Hoffman (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Laverne Martin, Martha Martin, Edmund Martin, Ellen Dettwiler, Lorene Bean, Howard Martin, Maurice Martin, James Martin, Alice Brubacher, Elmer Good, Lorene Brubacher, Eleanor Buehler. Funeral: March 12 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Mooberry, Glen, 76, East Peoria, Ill., died April 17. Spouse: Dorothy Ropp Mooberry. Parents: Harry and Viola Oetzel Mooberry (deceased). Other survivors: children Keith, Steven, Joan Cashdollar; eight grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.

Ropp, Joseph, 81, Albany, Ore., died April 20 of congestive heart failure. Parents: Daniel and Barbara Ropp (deceased). Funeral: April 26 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Yoder, Mildred Kinsinger, 81, Kalona, Iowa, died April 14. Spouse: Harold Yoder. Parents: John and Katie Gingerich Kinsinger (deceased). Other survivors: children Marcus, John, Ruby Miller, Rachel Schwarzendruber, Della Gascho; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

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- **Lake Center Christian School**, a K-8 Mennonite school enrolling 370 students in the Akron/Canton area, is currently accepting applications for the following positions starting with the 1999-2000 school year: ***librarian, J.H. English, J.H. math and elementary classroom***.

  Please contact Matthew R. McMullen at 330-877-2049 for an application, or send resume to 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***art instructor*** to teach painting, drawing, graphic design, photography and art appreciation courses. Qualifications: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church. Teaching experience required. Master of fine arts degree preferred. Full-time position available August 11.

  Contact Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; marcusy@hesston.edu

- ***Technology coordinator*** position available at **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city elementary school. We need a technology coordinator who will teach computer skills and expand the technology program. This is a salaried 10-month position that begins Aug. 16, 1999.

  For a more detailed job description, or to request applications materials, contact Marv Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Wilderness Wind**, a Mennonite camp in northern Minnesota, is offering a ***women's ecospirituality canoe trip***, Aug. 22-29. The theme is "Finding the sacred in every living thing." If interested in joining, call 218-365-5873.

Position Opening:

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Application deadline: Aug. 1, 1999

Contact:

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  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Community mediation organization** seeks high-energy ***executive director***. Looking for strong administrative, leadership, marketing, communication skills. Duties with rapidly growing agency include program development and case management. Must be able to work with faith communities, social services and criminal justice system.

  Send letter of interest and resume with three references by May 25 to Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, 2006 Garden Hills, Champaign, IL 61821-1523. For questions, call Paul at 217-356-4711.

- **Oaklawn Outpatient Services** in Elkhart, Ind., has openings for experienced ***clinical social workers*** who enjoy working with children and families. Provide social assessments and therapy services to families and children; work with schools, social service agencies, courts and families to identify and meet needs of children and youth; competitive salary and fringe benefits. If you have an MSW, clinical experience working with families, and Indiana licensure, please contact us.

  Contact Oaklawn, 330 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527; 800-282-0809. EEO/AA

- **Wanted:** enthusiastic, visionary leader with strong record of performance and team building as ***president/CEO*** of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community. VMRC is a leading full-continuum retirement community located in Harrisonburg, Va., in the Shenandoah Valley. Current president/CEO is retiring. New leader must be dedicated Christian with high integrity, have an understanding of Anabaptist beliefs, be willing to join a sponsoring Mennonite congregation, have at least 5+ years of key management experience, preferably in senior housing/services or health care, and a passion for this field. Master's degree preferred.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **All Mennonite Central Committee workers** are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. MCC is actively recruiting:

  Computer services manager for Ten Thousand Villages in Akron, Pa. Qualifications include a college degree or training/experience equivalent in systems analysis and design; a minimum of four years experience in at least two major computer languages; experience with administering Novell NetWare; strong personnel management experience: managing a group of two or more programmer/analyst/network technicians, strong oral and written communication skills, problem-solving skills; ability to analyze business problems, interpret information, evaluate issues and devise technical and software solutions; strong project management experience: developing and managing programming projects, ability to provide leadership and take initiative, and ability to work cooperatively with others.

  Customer service/administrative secretary (retail sales manager) for Ten Thousand Villages in Akron, Pa. Qualifications include good public relations skills accompanied by an appreciation of all customers and a pleasant/cooperative attitude, customer service training and/or experience helpful, basic computer familiarity, experience with Word Perfect and good typing skills, strong organizational skills and the ability to prioritize work while functioning productively in a team environment, and knowledge of Ten Thousand Villages products and mission.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns, Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Department, 717-859-1151; email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org. Last day to receive applications is May 25, 1999.

- **Long-term mental illness** is to be addressed by John E. Toews during a ***weekend retreat June 4-6*** at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Toews is professor of psychiatry at the University of Calgary and author of *No Longer Alone: Mental Health and the Church* (Herald Press). He will give three addresses on themes from Psalm 23. People whose families and friends have been touched by mental illness are urged to register for this retreat. For information or to register, call Paul D. Leichty, 888-284-3118; email PDLeichty@aol.com

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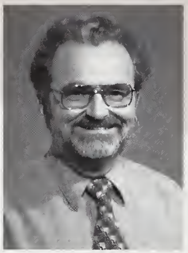

J. Lorne Peachey

Telling God what to do …

Wake up, O Lord! … Get up! … Rise up! Come and help us!—Psalm 44:23, 26a

Perhaps it's no accident that my 1999 Bible-reading schedule has me in the Psalms at the same time that I'm trying to come to grips with the horrors of the past few weeks. As I read the psalmist's petitions, I ask: How do you pray about the student massacre in Littleton, Colo.? What do you say to God as the bombs and bloodshed continue in Kosovo?

This time through the Psalms, I notice how often the writer uses what I consider in-your-face language when addressing God. His "wake up … get up … rise up!" from Psalm 44 isn't exactly polite, dispassionate discourse. Nor is "answer me quickly" (Psalm 69:17) or "please hurry" (Psalm 71:12).

Those aren't words I've been trained to use in addressing God. Burdened by the illness of a friend, the death of a loved one, or a tragedy in my community, I'm more likely to pray, "If it is your will …" or "I don't understand, but …"

Not the psalmist. Here the language is much more direct, even confrontational. To be sure, there are times when the writer acknowledges the need for patience and silence. But when praying for things that come from the depth of his being, the psalmist has no hesitation in using active verbs to tell God exactly what he would like God to do.

It's as though the Almighty were a parent. From my experience as a father, I know that the most difficult requests I have to respond to are those couched in polite language with vague requests: "If it isn't too much trouble for you …" or "If you'd agree, I'd like to …" How much easier to say yes or no when the request is direct, with feeling, out of the depth of a child's heart.

Reading the Psalms again leads me to believe God would have the same from us. The answer may be yes, the answer may be no. But when we are direct, there will be no doubt about what we want—and about the answer that we need.—*jlp*

… in Littleton and Kosovo

How can I be more direct in my prayers about Colorado and the Balkans (two tragedies which are the focus of this week's *The Mennonite*)?

Anne Lamott in *Traveling Mercies* (Pantheon, 1999) notes that the "best," i.e., the most fervent and heartfelt, prayer many of us pray is "Help me! Help me! Help me!" No ifs, ands or buts when we're in a tough situation. We know what to say almost instinctively.

What answers will come I don't know now. But that doesn't keep me from praying—from my heart and from my deepest wishes: "Stop it! Get rid of all this violence!"

Can we transfer that intensity to our prayers for others? To pray with feeling about Littleton, I need to imagine what it would be like to be a student crouching under a library table, watching a friend get shot in the face. Or a parent waiting at a nearby elementary school for some word of the fate of a daughter or son. Or—and here I can only imagine the horror—a parent who learns that his son is the one behind the guns and the bombs.

To pray with feeling for those in Kosovo, I need to imagine myself a grandfather, attempting to pull his grandchildren to safety with the farm tractor and wagon. Or a father being taken from his family and forced against his will to fight for independence. Or a soldier being ordered to plunder and burn a town just because the "wrong" people live there.

When I have these images, then I know exactly what I want to tell God: "Stop it! Don't let them kill! Help! Get rid of all this violence!"

That is my prayer for Littleton. For Kosovo. And for many more situations of conflict around the world. Humanly, we don't seem to be able to do it. It's up to you, God.

What answers will come I don't know now. But that doesn't keep me from praying—from my heart and from my deepest wishes. Like the psalmist, I can only keep asking, in language direct and to the point: "Wake up, O God! Come and help us!"—*jlp*

the Mennonite

May 25, 1999

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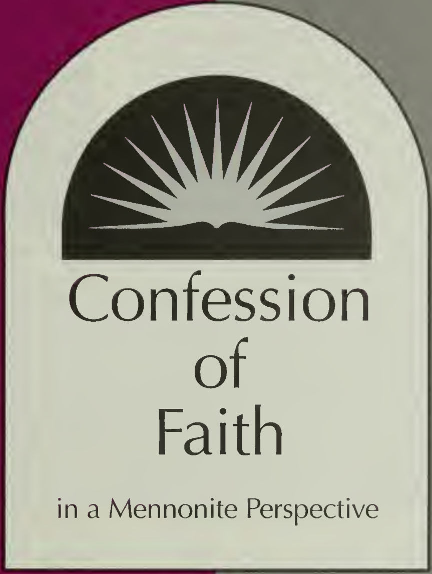
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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

What's in a name?

I would like to allay some of A.J. Scott's fears (Readers Say, May 4). First, she or he is concerned about a woman being offensive by not honoring her mother and mother-in-law by hyphenating only her and her husband's paternal ancestors' name. This is an issue my husband and I struggled with when we decided to each keep our own surnames when we married. But I have come to realize that women in most cultures were not given surnames when they were handed out. There is ultimately no surname for them to pass on.

Second, she or he was concerned about being offensive to a child who would end up with a string of surnames. But I would like to think children whose names would be hyphenated (as in our situation) would learn that they have choices. Just as their parents chose to do something different, they can decide what they want to do with their own surnames. As far as what having 16 surnames would do to family genealogy, it seems it would make it much easier to do. I am still trying to find maternal ancestors' surnames in my own family history.

If Scott is correct that keeping one's surname is a self-serving gesture, then perhaps hyphenating names is the real solution to preserving marriage. The current tradition of men keeping their surnames and women changing theirs has half of the marriage partners being self-serving. With this traditon we have a divorce rate of roughly 50 percent. Perhaps as more men hyphenate their names and thus become less selfish, the divorce rate will drop.

Finally, if the writer finds puzzling the practice of women keeping, doubling or hyphenating their surnames when they marry, perhaps talking to some of the couples who have done this would clear up some of the confusion. —*Denise Ratcliff, Coatesville, Pa.*

A.J. Scott suggests that married women who hyphenate their last names or take double last names are participating in a self-serving, divorce-fueling gesture. As a married man with a hyphenated last name, I'd like to offer a different perspective. When Valerie and I were married last summer, three wonderful things happened in a short afternoon: I joined the Weaver family, Valerie joined the Zercher family, and together we formed a new family. We chose the name Weaver-Zercher for our new family because we think it best represents the mystery of that day: the two became one. Fortunately, that one was not me but us.

And what about our children? If Valerie and I someday have some little Weaver-Zerchers, I suspect they'll sometimes be happy with their last name, sometimes be unhappy with it and most of the time won't give it a passing thought. In any case, if these hypothetical hyphenated children survive to adulthood and choose to marry, we trust they'll be mature enough to configure last names that are pleasing to them. In the end, we can only hope for them what we currently have: a spouse—and a last name—that bring them joy.—*David L. Weaver-Zercher, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Thank goodness for A.J. Scott's insightful letter. It might have saved my marriage. I thought our marriage was based on love, trust and a desire to serve God. I can now see that our family is on the brink of disaster because of my selfishness in maintaining two last names. (My husband and children use only one.) We will certainly have to receive intense counseling. I can only hope that my 2-year-old has not been permanently scarred. And I'm so glad we chose to name our son something other than Michael Jr., who could have someday fathered Michael III. No family could survive two such self-serving gestures.—*Sharon Stutzman Hartzler, Rittman, Ohio*

It is sad that letters like the one from A.J. Scott continue to keep men and women from becoming equal. Scott (I am assuming a male wrote this letter) shows chauvinist beliefs in his reasoning about why women should take their husband's last name. I do not promote keeping your last name or hyphenating it as a feminist benefit for personal recognition and identity; I consider it a bid for long-denied equality and keeping one's identity.

In my own story, my wife is a professor who had been publishing books and articles for years before we were married. If she took my last name when we married, she would lose the status that her last name had given her. She would have to start building her reputation again. To me (and her), that seemed like a ridiculous thing to do. Since I have not begun to publish yet, perhaps I should have taken her last name. As it is, we both kept our own last names, and we will decide what last name to give our child when we have one. There is no need for me to prove that she is my property by forcing her to give up the identity she has known for 30 years.—*William Goldberg, Harrisonburg, Va.*

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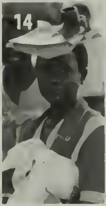
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readers say

The paradoxes of war taxes

I was a bit disappointed in the April 6 issue. There apparently has been no new thinking on the subject of war taxes since the last time this was a burning issue. I agree with Marian Franz ("The Claims of God and Caesar") that the Pharisee with the coin with the graven image of Augustus Caesar was betraying his professed allegiance to the law of Moses. I disagree with her explanation of why he had the coin. I believe the Pharisee had this coin because he was participating in Caesar's economy. He was privately doing business with those whom he publicly castigated as enemies of Israel. I believe that the response "render under Caesar" must be understood in that light. I believe that Jesus was telling us that if we participate in Caesar's economy, we owe Caesar a share of our gains.

Caesar comes at us like a highwayman, willing and able to come in and take whatever Caesar determines to be his share. Due to interest and penalties, those who make a show of resisting will end up rendering more than those who do not resist. This is the first paradox of the war tax issue.

When there is little or no money available, Caesar quickly loses interest. Those who choose to live on the lower fringe of Caesar's economy are not expected to render. However, if we all choose to live on that fringe, there will be no money to support the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. No money for Mennonite Central Committee. Little or no money for the panoply of camps, boards, schools, publications, etc., that are the visible representations of our attempts to do church. We all recognize, at least in theory, that we cannot serve both God and mammon. But we have yet to figure out how to serve God without at least some mammon. I suppose this is the second paradox of the war tax issue.—*John M. Eby, Pennsville, N.J.*

LIBERTY and JUSTICE for ALL?

"Don't mistreat any foreigners who live in your land. Instead treat them as well as you treat citizens and love them as much as you love yourself."
Leviticus 19:33,34a

In Chandler, Arizona, in 1997, police participated in a "roundup" to clean up downtown Chandler. More than 420 were arrested, many because of their skin color or for speaking Spanish. Legal residents and U.S. citizens were also arrested because, as one observer noted, they "look Mexican."

The Arizona Attorney General charged the city with racial targeting: arrests were made for, "no other reason than their skin color or Mexican appearance or the use of the Spanish language.

This is not an isolated incident. According to Immigration and Naturalization Service records, 81 percent of deportees in 1998 were Mexican. Another 9 percent were from Central America.

Become aware of immigration issues in your community and learn to advocate on behalf of the newcomer. Contact MCC U.S. and ask for "Welcoming the Newcomer: Doing Advocacy with Immigrants," an information packet on immigration issues. For more information about MCC U.S. work with immigration, contact MCC U.S. via e-mail at rjy@mccus.org.

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A new Mennonite replies
to Julia Kasdorf

by David Wright

This is why we cannot leave the beliefs
or what else could we be?
—Julia Kasdorf, from "Mennonites"

As best I can tell, most of our quilts here were inherited,
or bought at relief sales, spread on guest beds
and splayed on shiny oak racks. Not much borscht,
few shoofly pies at potlucks—instead it's
hummus, free-range chicken, carob brownies.
No bacon-laced bean casserole. Someone
steamed soy beans last Sunday, right in the pods.

Maundy Thursday we wash each other's hands.
It is optional, so I stay seated,
beside a Lutheran woman, Harvard
theologian, and we wish together
for liturgy because we cannot play
the name game. Neither can my agnostic
Quaker friend. We drink coffee on Mondays
to talk politics instead. Between fields,
one farmer, ex-Amish and an Otto
brother, teaches medieval Catholic
thinkers whose names I can never recall.

So many new and remade and restless
and not-quite Mennonites, driving Volvos
and minivans. We park ourselves in pews
next to women and men who know better
what real Mennonites really are, at least
have usually been, who tolerate us
when we do not know or want to the so
many stories we should. Some seem amused,
some even grieved, others simply angry
that our martyr stories come in children's
sermons where Dirk rescues and is killed right
next to Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges,
where Luther himself nails necessary
correctives on Wittenberg's door.

We sing,
though, a solid four parts; the hymns here have
a sturdy bottom (though I need the book
on 606). And we make our way through
less solid but sweet guitar-sent songs
your great-uncles would never recognize.
Our preacher never swoons. He's biblical,
careful, and knows the university
crowd listens each week. Once, he prayed, "May God
bless your mind's wanderings." Which go now to
China Buffet, where two tables away
a woman wears heavy head covering
and pale green dress as she eats with her son.
I say to Becky, "Should we tell her?" "What?"
"That we're Mennonites too?" Becky smiles, licks
sugar from her fingers, the residue
of deep fried dough passing here for ethnic
dessert—"Maybe we could tell her we're new
at it?" God bless our wandering, indeed.

David Wright teaches at Richland Community College, Decatur, Ill.

From Emden to Los Angele

The Spirit of Pentecost that fell on the frightened disciples in the upper room and ignited the lowlanders

by John E. Sharp

When Melchior Hoffman, a persuasive Lutheran-evangelist-turned-Anabaptist, arrived in the Friesian village of Emden in 1530, the place exploded. The explosion was not ignited by gunpowder but by the Spirit of Pentecost. Hoffman baptized 300 people that day. Among those baptized were new missionaries, evangelists and church planters, who were sent out immediately to fan the flame.

The fires of Pentecost ignited at Emden, spread rapidly along the coast of the North Sea southward to present-day Belgium, westward along the shores of the Baltic Sea and inland up the Rhine River toward the highlands of present-day Germany.

John E. Sharp

Evangelist to L.A.: Chuwang Pam

Anabaptist theology makes so much sense in this urban setting.

—Chuwang Pam

The people of Emden, along with the rest of the lowlanders, were restless and anxious. The structures they had come to depend on—economic, religious and political—were falling apart and provided no security. What could fortify them during these tumultuous times?

The gospel carried by the articulate Hoffman invited his hearers to find security in Christ through repentance and baptism, to be accountable to one another in the community of Christ and to reject the false security of the sword. Vengeance should be left to God, who would deal with the ungodly soon. It seemed that Christ's return was imminent.

In those ominous, apocalyptic times, the gospel— the call for repentance, union with Christ, community and nonviolence—was good news indeed.

The good news in Los Angeles: Such was the good news I observed recently in Southern California, where a neo-Anabaptist Pentecost is occurring. Missionaries, evangelists and church planters are preaching, baptizing, teaching—in many languages: Indonesian, Spanish, English, Taiwanese, Mandarin, Hausa, Ibo, Japanese and Ethiopian.

New believers are being mentored and trained to become evangelists and missionaries. Some will go to their native lands; some will stay in the United States—the more difficult of the two mission fields. Chuwang Pam, who was sent by his Nigerian church as an evangelist to Los Angeles, told me it was a shock to see the violence, the disrespect of youth for elders and the disintegration of families here. Even the pagans in northern Nigeria didn't act this badly, he said.

Chuwang Pam had been a wealthy businessman in Nigeria. When he received a call to evangelize, he left his status and wealth behind. Now he lives in south central Los Angeles. His congregation worships a block or two from the corner of Florence and Normandie, where the 1992 riots erupted after the police officers who had beaten Rodney King were acquitted. Pastor Pam often stops on the freeways of Los Angeles to help a stranded motorist, though conventional wisdom warns otherwise.

Finally a Mennonite: Pastor Pam and his congregation were received as members of the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference last year. He responded to the assembly by confessing joyfully, "Finally, I'm a Mennonite!"

This sounded so different from what I've often heard. I've been hearing that Anabaptism and Mennonite identity are deterrents to evangelism, that we should drop Mennonite as a name, that the Mennonite church should repent of its emphasis on peacemaking. Recently I hear a man tell an appreciative audience that he was finally free of his Mennonite

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the church is

nden is now moving powerfully in the multicultural churches in Southern California.

John E. Sharp

Gift of preaching: Ude Chima

bondage. He experienced freedom only when he laid down his Anabaptist heritage at the foot of the cross. (But that's where our heritage begins. It leads us from the cross, and it shapes our ministry.)

Pastor Pam told me, "Anabaptist theology makes so much sense in this urban setting." When I asked what it was about Anabaptist theology that made sense to him, he said, "Nonviolence is the answer to violence in the city. Building a spiritual community for people who have none—not even a biological community—meets a vital need. And most important, the Bible is read in a way that recognizes Jesus as the center."

Sister Ude Chima, a young woman with the gift of preaching, is being trained for ministry. She was also enthusiastic about being a Mennonite, even after hearing of the violent uprising at Münster in 1534, an event that sounds like the 1993 Branch Davidian disaster of Waco, Texas. She and her colleagues at an evening training session of leaders in south central Los Angeles appreciated all the more the ministry of Menno Simons. Menno saved the Anabaptist movement from the errors of using the sword by consistently guiding his flock toward Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

In that evening meeting, which resembled a revival meeting more than a teaching session, people from nine language groups read 1 Corinthians 3:11, Menno's favorite text, in their native language. What a powerful multicultural testimony! It got better. They spoke freely of their commitment and joy in serving Christ, the solid foundation. And they gave thanks for faithful martyrs of the 16th century, and for a church that still remembers its stories.

Helping fan this neo-Anabaptist movement is the Center for Anabaptist Leadership (CAL), a decentralized, flexible training resource. Its motto: "Training, coaching and consulting for the urban church." Jeff Wright coordinates the multiracial staff of six. Jeff is also Southern California area minister for Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. This area has a worshiping community of about 2,000—50 percent of the conference membership. Only about 14 percent are Anglo.

Where integration is good news: There in that urban center, where Anabaptism "makes sense," the integration of Mennonite bodies also makes sense. Because the Pacific Southwest Conference is already integrated, it is able to present a unified witness for Christ, for church planting and for leadership training. Here is a model for mission-motivated integration. If others of us cannot see the need for integration in our own settings, we ought to do it for our sisters and brothers in urban settings like Los Angeles.

The Spirit of Pentecost that fell on the frightened disciples in the upper room and ignited the lowlanders of Emden is now moving powerfully in the multicultural churches in Southern California. I'm convinced it is they who will show us the way into the 21st century. And I know I'll never be the same after learning from these sisters and brothers on the West Coast, who have come to our shores as missionaries.

John E. Sharp is director of the historical committee and archives of the Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.

Because the Pacific Southwest Conference is already integrated, it is able to present a unified witness for Christ, for church planting and for leadership training. Here is a model for mission-motivated integration.

Baptism is dangerous

When you are baptized, doing it your way is replaced by doing it Jesus' way. And that can get you into trouble.

by Kenneth L. Gibble

I like what William Willimon has said about baptism: "When you join the Rotary, they give you a handshake and a lapel pin. When you join the church, we throw you in the water and half drown you" (*Peculiar Speech*, Eerdmans, 1992).

In my Church of the Brethren tradition, that drowning business comes dangerously close to being reality. At our baptisms, the person is immersed three times into the water, once for each member of the Trinity.

When I was a youngster, the baptisms of our church were held in the creek that ran near our house. One Sunday when several people were baptized, everything went along fine until it was the turn of one teenaged girl to enter the stream. She was terrified of the swiftly flowing current, and the minister had to gently coax her to go with him and to kneel down in the water. After doing his best to reassure her, he pushed her head under the surface for the first time. She came up out of the water with a shout of terror and headed for the bank. No amount of coaxing could get her back for the second and third dunks. It was kind of funny, really, but nobody laughed. And the impression it made on me as a child was that getting baptized is a dangerous business.

The way of Jesus is the way of the cross. Baptism never lets you forget that. Baptism means that your life is no longer your own; now it belongs to the Lord.

Nothing I have seen or heard since then has made me change my mind.

Baptism is dangerous, first of all, because it's a kind of dying. Here's how the apostle Paul describes it: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3).

What does Paul mean by "baptized into his death"? I'm not sure, but I think Paul is arguing that baptism signifies dying to our old, self-centered, sinful nature. It means putting to death the attitude of "I've gotta be me" and "I did it my way." That attitude is popular these days. It insists that what I think is right and worthwhile and important is the only thing that counts. It declares, "Nobody can tell me what to do." It is the voice of individualism.

Baptism is dangerous because it means the death of that way of thinking. When you are baptized, doing it your way is replaced by doing it Jesus' way. And that can get you into trouble. The way of Jesus is the way of the cross. Baptism never lets you forget that. Baptism means that your life is no longer your own; now it belongs to the Lord.

Baptism is a dangerous dunking in another way. Baptism means you are adopted into the craziest family you can imagine. Of course, every family is crazy in its own way. There is the colorful uncle who always shows up at the family gatherings with a new car and a new girlfriend. There is the little brother who is such a pest. Maybe there is the mother who drives everyone nuts with her perfectionism, the father who still hasn't learned how to say "I love you" to his kids.

But the family you are adopted into when you are baptized is even crazier. It's the kind of family only the Lord could love. In this family there are Holy Rollers and Pentecostal shouters as well as monastics who practice silence. There are Bible-thumping fundamentalists and left-wing liberals. In this worldwide family, there are people who speak a multitude of languages, who dress for church in everything from priestly robes to African dashikis to cut-off shorts. There are Democrats and Republicans. There are black people and white people and people of every shade in-between. There are people who believe abortion is a mortal sin and people who believe it is a matter of choice. There are gay people and straight people. There are people who make a career out of military service and people who would rather go to jail than wear a military uniform. There are people who will tell you they know with absolute certainty when the Lord will return and people who will tell you they don't have a clue. There are people in this family you probably couldn't stand to be in the same room with for more than five minutes.

But like them or not, agree with them or not, this is the family you become part of when you are baptized. We call it the church. And it's not our church. It's the Lord's church. He gave his life for it, and he loves it. He loves each person in it, loves me and loves you and

Baptism means you are part of this family, the church, this worldwide conglomeration of baptized people known as the body of Christ.

loves the craziest member of it.

Paul says it this way: "In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26-28).

Baptism means you are part of this family, the church, this worldwide conglomeration of baptized people known as the body of Christ.

There's another way baptism is dangerous. It's dangerous because it marks you for life. Like all the rest of it, this is God's doing. It's a mystery I don't pretend to understand. But I believe it with all my heart: that when you are baptized, you are changed forever, you will never be the same.

Some people who are baptized drop out of church life. I think I understand why that happens. They get busy with other things. Maybe something that happens in the church offends them or turns them off. Maybe circumstances in their life make them feel ashamed or guilty. And so they gradually stop attending worship. And after awhile, they just don't feel part of the church anymore.

Does that mean they are lost? In one sense it does. They are lost to the rest of us because we no longer have the benefit of their ideas, their questions, their tears and laughter. We no longer can see their faces, shake their hands. It is our loss and theirs as well because they no longer have the benefit of our ideas and questions, our tears, our laughter. Because of this "lostness," we want them back. We pray for their return, their recommitment.

But are they lost to God? I don't know that. But I do know there is One who is constantly watching for them, like a father waiting for his prodigal son; there is One who is seeking them, like a shepherd who leaves the 99 and goes searching for the lost sheep.

It's dangerous to be baptized, because for the rest of your life you will never be able to get away from the One who has named you and claimed you, the One to whom you belong. The Lord of life will suffer any pain, any indignity for you, no matter where you go or what you do.

If baptism is this scary, this dangerous, why would anyone want to be baptized? Because it's the best thing you can ever do. You give yourself to the Lord, and the Lord gives you new life. Remember what Paul says about being baptized into the death of Jesus? This is the very next thing Paul writes: "Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

It's dangerous to be baptized, because for the rest of your life you will never be able to get away from the One who has named you and claimed you, the One to whom you belong.

There's your answer—"new life." When you come out of the water, you are new and clean. You are changed forever, by the grace of God. You are no longer your own man or woman, boy or girl. And that is why I say to people as I help them get to their feet after their baptism: "Now you belong to Jesus."

There is nothing better, no one better, to belong to.

Kenneth Gibble is a Church of the Brethren pastor who lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

Debate over membership raises questions about confession of faith understandings

They are the same words, organized into the same 24 articles that were adopted four years ago by the same actions of two delegate bodies. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective was to be a unifying force for the new Mennonite Church in the United States. But despite all the commonalities, differing views about what the confession says and how it should be applied are key factors in the current debate over membership in the integrated church.

"We have sort of assumed that the other person or group interprets [the confession of faith] the way we do," says Marv Zehr, conference minister for Western District Conference. "It's dangerous to assume things."

The current issues may revolve around homosexuality. But the bottom-line question seems to be whether church members can disagree with the confession of faith—not to mention each other—and still remain members.

"In most cases where there are not clear interpretations, then there should be room for concession," says Fred Kanagy, moderator of North Central Conference. "But who decides what is clear and what isn't? That's the thorny problem."

Women in leadership is one of those cases. While Article 15 allows for women to serve as pastors, North Central doesn't agree. The conference executive committee has approved a statement affirming the confession but reiterating its belief that pastoral ministry is reserved for men.

But North Central doesn't have to agree with everything in the the confession of faith. The document's introduction says the confession is intended to be a guideline for belief, practice and interpretation of Scripture. Lois Barrett, a member of the committee that drafted the confession, describes it as defining the "theological center" of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church.

"We all need to be moving toward that [center]," says Barrett. "When we have disagreements, we need to sit down and discuss it in the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Zehr agrees that the confession is a guide for directing Christian life and not rigid doctrine. "Individual congregations need to interpret that according to their own experience," he says.

That produces different emphases and interpretations in different settings, such as in Virginia Conference, which has wrestled with the issue of granting membership to people in the military. The conference has allowed congregations to let military personnel become members while proclaiming the historic peace position. "It's right on the table," says conference minister Owen Burkholder. "It doesn't mean everyone falls in line yesterday."

But that doesn't mean any disagreement, any divergence from the confession of faith is acceptable. "There are fundamental, core beliefs in the confession of faith which I think 99 percent of the membership will say are firm and cannot be compromised," says Bob Hartzler, conference minister for Northern District Conference.

One such core belief is faith in Jesus Christ. But the lack of resolution on other issues, both lifestyle and theological, has generated concern about watering down beliefs and membership.

"I think our unity needs to be doctrinal unity," says Eastern District Conference pastor Bob Gerhart. "If we are handling the document in a way that brings up quite different conclusions, then to say there is unity among us, that we are united, is simply playing with words."

"If you don't take some type of stand, then anyone can come in," says Ralph Lehman, Franklin Conference representative to the MC General Board. "We get a little fearful when people say these are guidelines and open to interpretation."

He would like to see the confession of faith used for membership purposes. "If [new members] want to be in our denomination, they should be in agreement [with the confession of faith]," Lehman says. "If not, let's go back and change the confession."

But the confession was never intended to be a test for membership, says James Waltner, chair of the committee that developed membership guidelines for the integrated church. He says the confession and other statements are a starting point, that they "draw us back to take a look at what the foundations are."

And what are the foundations? Says Waltner, "The church keeps working at that."—*Rich Preheim*

The more things change …

Nearly 350 years ago, fractured groups of Dutch Mennonites tried to find unity and create a new body. But they got bogged down on, among other things, the role of confessions of faith.

"They were asking integration questions," says Karl Koop, a professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary who has studied Mennonite confessions of faith. "The parallels to our present discussions are striking."

Such discussions have been part of the Mennonite church throughout history. "There is no consistent way in which these confessional documents have functioned," Koop says.

Owen Burkholder, conference minister for Virginia Conference, tells of several confession-related events in Virginia in recent decades. In the mid-1960s, he says, the use of the prayer covering was debated. Disagreements over dress in the late 1960s and early 1970s led to the establishment of Southeastern Mennonite Conference, which left Virginia in 1972. —*Rich Preheim*

Mennonite Men expands outreach

GC organization to help fund MC, overseas churches

NEWTON, Kan.—After nearly 15 years of supporting new General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) congregations, Mennonite Men is enlarging its world.

Since 1985, the GC men's organization, through its Tenth Man program, has provided grants for congregations to build or buy their first meetinghouses. Twenty-seven GC or dually affiliated congregations in the United States or Canada have received more than $600,000 in grants.

But following policy changes made earlier this year by Mennonite Men's board, Tenth Man grants for the first time have been awarded to a Mennonite Church (MC) congregation and an overseas Mennonite congregation. Grace Mennonite Fellowship in Lacey Springs, Va., will receive a $30,000 grant for the construction of its new church building. Evangelical Mennonite Church in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, will receive $12,000 toward the purchase of a building.

The foray into grants for overseas congregations is akin to the mission work of agencies such as Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Board of Missions, says Mennonite Men coordinator Jim Gingerich.

"This gives a new, added perspective, something to give new life," he says.

The overseas grants are based on a Habitat for Humanity tithing policy that stipulates that 10 percent of all contributions be used for building homes outside North America. Likewise, 10 percent of contributions to Mennonite Men will go for overseas churches. The recipient congregations have to be recommended by a Mennonite agency, although they don't have to be Mennonite. If not Mennonite, the congregations have to be supported in some form by Mennonite mission work.

The Zaporozhye congregation was formed in 1994 and has more than 50 members who rent space in a school building for worship and Sunday school. COM workers Jake and Dorothy Unrau provide pastoral leadership.

The grant to Grace Mennonite Fellowship is part of the integration process. The Mennonite Church does not have a parallel men's organization, and Gingerich has been visiting MC area conferences to garner support for Mennonite Men. Gingerich says he has been warmly received in MC circles.

"This is a reciprocal move on our part," he says. "If there is an openness to us, we also want to make [grants] available to them."

Grace has been meeting in rented space in an elementary school, drawing as many as 100 people for Sunday worship. The congregation broke ground for its new building on April 11.

As part of the integration process, Mennonite Men plans to add three MC representatives to its board within the next year. Gingerich says the organization is already receiving contributions from MC members.

Tenth Man is the primary program of Mennonite Men. The name comes from a European Mennonite system of community organization. Each village mayor was assisted by "10th men," one elected for every 10 adult male property owners in the village to help carry out administrative duties and make decisions.—*Rich Preheim with GCMC News Service*

Photo by Larry Bartel

Graduates stole the show

Palmer Becker, director of Hesston (Kan.) College's Pastoral Ministries program, presents a stole to graduate Chris Epp as his wife, Katie, looks on during the program's May 8 commissioning service. The ceremony was one for graduating students on Mennonite campuses across the United States this spring. Hesston graduated 165 students during the weekend, including two Pastoral Ministries students. In other college and seminary commencements, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., graduated 34 students on May 21; Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., graduated 122 on May 23; Bluffton (Ohio) College will graduate 245 on May 30; Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., graduated 18 on April 24; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, graduated 332 on April 25; and Goshen (Ind.) College graduated 230 on May 23.

MCC study indicates new directions

Contributions of nontraditional workers on the rise

AKRON, Pa.—It happened 12 years ago without so much as an obituary.

"MCC as we knew it died in 1987," said Stephen Penner, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. interim executive director. "I am not suggesting that MCC as an institution died in 1987 but that a certain type of MCC came to an end at that time, that MCC has been replaced by something that looks a little different.

"[This] happened peacefully, quietly, and I for one did not notice when it happened."

Acknowledging that death, Penner and others gathered in Akron last month for two "study days" to discuss reports and envision new life for the 79-year-old agency in the first decades of the coming millennium.

Penner was part of a task force that analyzed MCC personnel trends over the last 30 years. The task force discovered that in 1987 MCC had a record 1,000 workers. But for the third consecutive year, more workers were serving in North America than overseas.

In 1987, the oldest baby boomers turned 40. The ratio of MCC workers under 40 to those over 40 was four to one in 1980; today it is virtually one to one. Also in 1987, the number of salaried workers for the first time surpassed 20 percent. And the number of short-term opportunities offered by MCC was just beginning to shoot upward.

"We are finding it increasingly important to recognize the number of non-North American and short-term workers serving with MCC," said task force chair Carol Eby-Good. "Their contribution is as important as that of a traditional three-year, board-appointed MCC worker."

Since the record highs of a decade ago, the number of "traditional" workers has dropped to 850. But participation in other areas remains strong. The task force estimates that more than 23,000 volunteers last year donated more than 1 million hours of work to MCC at thrift shops, stores, warehouses and relief sales. Also last year, 1,650 people served in MCC short-term programs. Three hundred forty North Americans served overseas with MCC in 1998. At the same time, MCC had 315 national staff—people from within a country who direct or support MCC work there.

Consultant Vernon Jantzi said MCC should consider increasing its recruitment of national or regional staff, such as Africans for African assignments. He encouraged the agency to aim for getting a third of its volunteers from areas other than Europe and North America.

"We need a global structure to do local mission as opposed to a local structure doing global mission," said Jantzi, an MCC executive committee member and sociology professor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

He raised several other personnel issues. Jantzi noted that most young people are interested in service assignments that offer explicit, overt opportunities to share the gospel. Does MCC offer such opportunities? He also said that MCC must recruit workers based on their values as well as on their skills and knowledge.

Yet it is workers with specific skills and knowledge that MCC partners are requesting. "Programs are changing," Eby-Good said, "and it's more difficult to match people with assignments."—*MCC News Service*

MCC's future: What a relief

AKRON, Pa.—To start the new millennium, relief work needs to be a major emphasis for Mennonite Central Committee because of its ability to capture the imaginations and touch the hearts of supporters, a consultant recently told MCC.

"It is one of the few ways to generate a united response," said Vernon Jantzi, a sociology professor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. He was one of several presenters last month at two "study days" on MCC's future work.

Among the many attributes of relief work, it is a concrete expression of Christian ministry and provides a rich opportunity for greater global awareness, Jantzi said.

MCC communications director Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker echoed his point. She said relief work connects emotionally with MCC constituents and is a unique ministry among North American mission agencies.

"Relief will dominate MCC's work for the next 10 years," Brubaker said.—*MCC News Service*

Service figures

These are some of the Mennonite Central Committee personnel trends as reported by an MCC task force:

- **In 1980, just over 50 percent of MCC workers were younger than 30; today, fewer than 30 percent are younger than 30.**
- **In 1969, 40 percent of workers were women; that number has now increased to 50 percent.**
- **In 1969, 66 percent of workers served overseas; last year, only 37 percent were assigned overseas.**
- **In 1970, 10 percent of MCC workers were salaried; 32 percent were salaried in 1998.—*MCC News Service***

Correction: The Mennonite Colloquium will be held in July in Essex, England. It has not already been held in Turku, Finland, as reported in the May 11 issue.

Snow birds are busy bees as SOOP volunteers

TUCSON, Ariz.—Maynard and Bernice Rufenacht don't winter in Tucson just because the weather is better than in Archbold, Ohio.

"We have to admit we enjoy the weather, but that's not the thing that holds us down here," says Maynard, a 76-year-old retired farmer who, with his wife, recently finished his 11th winter volunteering in the city. "It's touching people's lives. They touch yours also."

Similar to the Rufenachts, Francis and Eloise Schrock travel 2,000 miles each winter from Goshen, Ind., to pound nails, fix plumbing and serve meals each day to Tucson residents.

The Rufenachts and Schrocks work with Service Opportunities for Older People, operated jointly by Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Central Committee Canada. Last year saw a record of 150 participants in a variety of locations. In the first four months of 1999, 109 people volunteered.

Like SOOP participants, the Rufenachts and Schrocks pay their expenses. Most volunteers live in an MBM-owned house.

Maynard and Francis work for Community Home Repair Projects of Arizona Inc. (CHRPA), helping low-income area residents with home repairs. Bernice and Eloise work for a food bank, soup kitchen and children's center. They are also part of a sewing group, make layettes for babies at a local clinic and do computer work. "There's always plenty to do," Bernice says.

This is the sixth year SOOP has been in Tucson. CHRPA executive director Gary Bahman says the organization has always relied on volunteers such as the Schrocks and Rufenachts. Bahman, who also oversees SOOP in Tucson, says he hopes future generations of retirees continue to serve and volunteer.

The Rufenachts usually volunteer four days a week and don't have any problem finding activities for the other three, including traveling around Arizona and northern Mexico. "There's so many interesting things to see in this area," Maynard says. "We hardly know how to get it all in."

Like other Mennonite retirees in the Tucson area, the Rufenachts are connected to Shalom Mennonite Church. They participate in Bible study and a small group, and Maynard led worship one Sunday this past winter.

The Rufenachts say they will keep coming back to Tucson as long as their health permits them. "If we can hack it," Maynard says, "we may try another year."—*Marshall V. King for GCMC and MBM news services*

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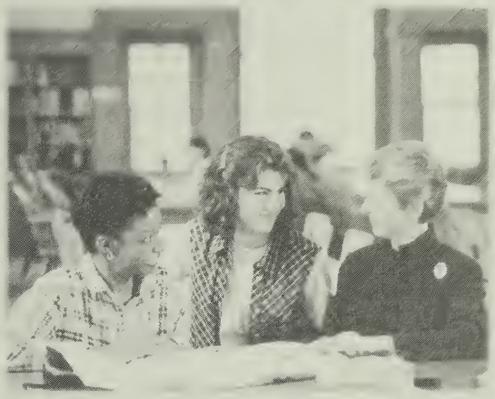

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United Native Ministries adds MB congregation

GOSHEN, Ind.—United Native Ministries, the Native associate group of the Mennonite Church, has now become inter-Mennonite. Lakota Gospel Church, a Mennonite Brethren congregation in Porcupine, S.D., has been accepted as a UNM member, the first non-MC congregation to join. The addition of Lakota Gospel Church brings the organization's membership to 13 congregations.

It's a bull market for college club

For the fourth consecutive year, the Student Investment Club at Bluffton (Ohio) College has outperformed the stock market.

In 1998, the club's portfolio realized a 50.25 percent gain, compared to Standard & Poor's 28.55 percent. The club's investments are worth $194,572.

"There's a bit of luck involved," says adviser and business professor Gary Schiefer. "But the students do their homework, and they deserve the credit for the success that's been achieved."

The club is part of Schiefer's "Financial Investments" course but is open to any student. The club does not invest in industries such as those related to alcohol, tobacco or the military.

—Lois J. Wetherill

Evangelism starts with listening, speaker says

DES PLAINES, Ill.—The good news of Jesus Christ is best shared with unbelievers through personal relationships, urban ministry workers heard last month.

"We in our culture today jump straight to preaching the gospel, and they can't hear it because we have not yet listened to their stories," said Noel Santiago, a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) consultant.

He was one of the presenters at the meeting of Mennonite area conference and congregational urban mission workers.

"If evangelism is going to happen, it has to happen at the congregational level," said John Powell, director of MBM's Evangelism and Church Development program.

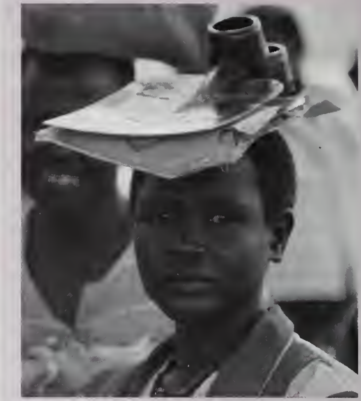
Using Luke 10, where Jesus sent out 72 workers, Santiago described how to evangelize—and how not to evangelize.

"When you enter a town, knock on the door, tell them they're going to hell, give them a tract and explain the difference between a Mennonite and a Mormon and then have the door shut in your face," Santiago said. "That's what [Luke 10] says, right?

"No, it says to speak peace and a blessing to them. Stay in fellowship with them. Get to know them. Start with meeting their felt needs."

Powell challenged the gathering to help 43,000 unbelievers meet Jesus Christ in the next three or four years. "We want them to encounter Christ in such a way that they need to make a decision to accept or reject Christ," he said. "It means a wholistic ministry."

—Christy Risser for MBM News Service



MCC photo by Dave Klassen

Head like a hoe

A Ugandan refugee carries two hoe heads on the top of her head. The hoes come from Mennonite Central Committee, which has been supplying the implements to people displaced by war in northern Uganda.

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French Mennonites decry Balkans conflict

VALDOIE, France—Calling on world governments "to encourage good and to discourage evil," the Evangelical Mennonite Churches of France have denounced NATO bombing in the Balkans and urged a return to the negotiating table.

"We are troubled by the suffering of displaced persons and refugees, and we are concerned about the conditions of life for the people of Kosovo," reads a declaration approved at a May 1 meeting of pastors and elders. "We are troubled by the operations of destruction in both Serbia and Kosovo and by the death of military personnel and civilians on both sides of the conflict."

The declaration notes dim prospects for peace through force, reiterates the Mennonite position on nonviolence and supports humanitarian aid for those affected by the conflict. *—MWC News Service*

Brazilian church sends second missionary

LEZHE, Albania—Amid the turmoil caused by the Kosovo refugee crises, Norma Teles is returning to Albania. But this time she is going with her denomination's mission agency.

Teles, a Brazilian Mennonite who previously served in Albania with Youth With a Mission, arrived in Lezhe on May 7. She is fully supported by JMMI, the new mission agency of the Brazilian Mennonite Church and is also associated with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. Teles will work in children's and youth ministries and lead Bible studies.

Teles is JMMI's second missionary assignment. The agency last month sent a family to Mozambique.*—JMMI and VMBM news services*

Youth ministers lament convention schedule

CANMORE, Alta.—One year ago, Mennonite youth ministers from the United States and Canada called for the new integrated Mennonite Church to hold a binational youth convention in 2001.

This year, the youth ministers, who met April 28-May 2 for their annual Youth Ministry Council, lamented the decision to hold separate U.S. and Canadian youth conventions in 2001, followed by a joint convention in 2003.

"I think that, in a very real sense, this year the group began to understand what integration will mean for [Youth Ministry Council] and ministries like youth conventions," says Carlos Romero, minister of youth and youth convention coordinator for the Mennonite Church. "There was a tremendous sense of grief about what is being lost."*—Carol Duerksen*

MCC's birth takes the stage at Goshen College

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Russian famine and response of American Mennonites 80 years ago took the spotlight at Goshen (Ind.) College on May 16 with the premiere of *As Lifting Chaff,* an original play written by three Goshen seniors.

The drama begins with the arrival of a delegation of four Russian Mennonites sent to inform U.S. Mennonites of the famine decimating their country. The play then follows the famine and the subsequent development of Mennonite Central Committee.

As Lifting Chaff was written by Timothy Kennel from Harrisonburg, Va.; Grant Rissler from Front Royal, Va.; and Peter Scott from Scottdale, Pa.

Pastor, wife killed in Ohio traffic accident

NEWTON, Kan.—Longtime pastor John Freed, 68, and his wife, Dottie, were killed May 17 near Celina, Ohio, in an automobile accident with a semi and a school bus. Freed had been interim pastor at Groffdale Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa., since March 1. Previous pastorates included Fox Street Mennonite Church, New York City; Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.; First Mennonite Church, Huntingdon Valley, Pa. Freed concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., in December 1998.

by the way ...

According to a recent survey, 74 percent of Mennonite Brethren high school-age youth approve of serving in the armed forces, while 7 percent disapprove. *—Christian Leader*

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Births

Alger, Alexander Don, April 23, to Jon and Melanie (Sommers) Alger, Orrville, Ohio.

Bauman, Leah Elizabeth, April 4, to Janet (Martin) and Trevor Bauman, Elmira, Ont.

Gerber, Jacob Lewis, April 21, to Gail (Graves) and Randy Gerber, Goshen, Ind.

Gilger, Erin Grace, April 3, to Andrew and Audrey (Kurtz) Gilger, Lancaster, Pa.

Groh, Sarah Kathrine, April 6, to Delores (Nisley) and Paul Groh, Dublin, Ohio.

Harnish, Christopher André, April 30, to Monica (Hostetler) and Steve Harnish, Bluffton, Ohio.

Hershberger, Adam, March 10, 1999, received for adoption March 12, 1999, by John and Souk (Kamkasoumphou) Hershberger, Chandler, Ariz.

Hochstetler, Dexter Gene, April 22, to Elizabeth (Endris) and Gene Hochstetler, Shipshewana, Ind.

Knechtel, Heather Victoria, April 8, to John and Tara (Bender) Knechtel, Tavistock, Ont.

Lichti, Christian James, April 17, to Judy (Chilcoat) and Tim Lichti, Shickley, Neb.

Litwiller, Joel Thomas, April 25, to Carol (Zimmerman) and William Litwiller Jr., Hopedale, Ill.

MacLeod, Jacob Martin, April 23, to David and Denise (Martin) MacLeod, Waterloo, Ont.

Pankratz, Grant Hamill, April 7, to Kim (Hamill) and Scott Pankratz, Overland Park, Kan.

Rawland, Jonah Dean, April 19, to Dean and Lisa (Kurtz) Rawland, Hartville, Ohio.

Reimer-Berg, Ruth Sierra, April 21, to Don and Jennifer Reimer-Berg, Salem, Ore.

Solano, Isabel Beatrice, April 19, to Bernadette (Kelly) and José Solano, Hillsboro, Ore.

Stall, Luke Daniel, April 13, to Chad and Michelle (Fredritz) Stall, Ottawa, Ohio.

Thomas, MacKenzie Ann, April 16, to Arlan and Joann (Thomas) Thomas, Johnstown, Pa.

Weaver, Lauren Elizabeth, April 22, to Matthew and Michelle (Nussbaum) Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Winton, Alyson Marie, April 10, to Kami (Layman) and Marc Winton, Fairview, Mich.

Wright, Hannah Juliet, April 12, to Chris and Lori (Keener) Wright, Morton, Ill.

Marriages

Braley/Stoltzfus: Desiree Braley, Denver, and Michael Stoltzfus, Hartville, Ohio, April 10 at Denver.

Henning/Horn: Tom Henning, Geuda Springs, Kan., and Jennifer Horn, Hutchinson, Kan., May 1 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Mellott/Rohrer: Rachel Mellott, Telford, Pa., and Casey Rohrer, Sellersville, Pa., May 1 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Pipho/Zimmerman: Penelope Pipho, Charlotte, N.C., and Jonathan Zimmerman, Lancaster, Pa., April 24 at Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, Charlotte.

Shannon/Stutzman: Patrick Shannon, Hartville, Ohio, and Patricia Stutzman, Hartville, April 18 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

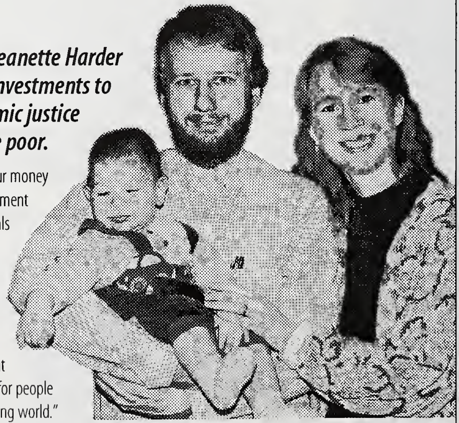
Short/Vosz: Ryan Short, Archbold, Ohio, and Karen Vosz, Defiance, Ohio, May 1 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Deaths

Becker, Helen, 88, Inman, Kan., died April 9. Spouse: George Becker. Parents: Henry and Helena Thiessen Regehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Eldon, Vivian Stucky, Doris Frick; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 13 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Bixel, James, 85, Freeman, S.D., died March 17 of pneumonia. Spouse: Phyllis Newton Bixel. Parents: Samuel and Fannie Amstutz Bixel (deceased). Other survivors: children Sara Schrag, Mary Waltner; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 28 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman; May 2 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Bricker, Sarah Lee, 23, Iowa City, Iowa, died April 19 of injuries in an auto accident. Parents: Dennis and Melinda Michalske Bricker. Grandparents: Verneille Bricker and Doris Michalske. Other survivor: brother Matthew. Memorial service: May 1 at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City.



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Detwiler, Anna Mary Detweiler, 92, Souderton, Pa., died April 26 of a cerebrovascular accident. Spouse: Henry Detwiler (deceased). Parents: Eli and Stella Detweiler (deceased). Funeral: April 29 at Souderton, Pa.

Dick, Richard, 82, Buhler, Kan., died March 23. Spouse: Dorothy Giddings Dick. Parents: Dietrich and Justine Dick (deceased). Other survivors: children Connie Rueck, Diane Romans, Mark; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler.

Diener, Savilla Taylor, 79, Akron, Pa., died April 19. Spouse: Menno Diener. Parents: Elam and Mary Horst Taylor (deceased). Other survivors: children Grace Tyson, Elaine Taylor, Nevin, Arlen, Claude; seven grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Ehrisman, Alice Roth, 82, Beemer, Neb., died April 27. Spouse: Walter Ehrisman (deceased). Parents: Calvin and Emma Boshart Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Karen Hathaway, Warren; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 29, at Beemer Mennonite Church.

Friesen, Willie, 83, Inman, Kan., died March 13. Spouse: Ella Toews Friesen. Other survivors: children Charles, Jonas, Otis, Benjamin; eight grandchildren. Funeral: March 16 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Hershberger, Hazel, 89, Goshen, Ind., died April 23. Spouse: John Hershberger (deceased). Parents: Allen Winfred and Anna Inez Shupe Kuhns (deceased). Survivors: children Allen Tice, Robert Hershberger; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hershey, Nora, 89, Lititz, Pa., died April 29. Spouse: Jacob Hershey (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Cora Eberly Snavely (deceased). Survivors: children Carrie Strickler, Jean Buckwalter; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Lititz, Pa.

Hilty, Herman, 88, Bluffton, Ohio, died April 27. Spouse: Celia Sprunger Hilty. Parents: Philip and Rhoda Niswander Hilty (deceased). Other survivors: children Ann, Judith Kingsley, Rachel Friesen, Suzanne Lind; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: May 8 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Matz, Allen, 78, Leola, Pa., died April 24. Spouse: Elsie High Matz. Parents: Jacob and Mary Kissinger Matz (deceased). Other survivors: children Esther Erb, Ruth Buehler; stepdaughter Judy Smoker; five grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 27 at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Maust, Grace, 35, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, died March 11 of cancer. Spouse: James Maust. Other survivor: child Grace Felicity. Funeral: March 20 in Taiwan.

Richard, Princess Basinger, 82, Bluffton, Ohio, died April 28. Spouse: Cecil Richard (deceased). Parents: Jeremiah and Anna Diller Basinger (deceased). Survivors: children Daryl, Randall, Marlene; two stepgrandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Roth, Lois Irene Kauffman, 83, Hesston, Kan., died April 21. Spouse: Vernon Roth (deceased). Parents: James and Mabel Erb Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Joanne, Becky, Lowell, Marci Huxman; 12 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Memorial: April 24 at Hesston.

Shannon, Marie Saunders, 91, Phoenix, died April 26. Spouse: Ben Shannon (deceased). Parents: Ora and Malinda Short Saunders (deceased). Survivors: children Donna Haydock; stepchildren Patricia Rosener, Mary Benita West, Benson; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at Phoenix.

Weaver, Ralph Conrad, 49, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 15 of cancer. Spouse: Anne Duncan Weaver. Parents: Richard and Virginia Weaver. Other survivors: children Kimberly, Scott; stepdaughter Tracey Duncan. Funeral: April 18 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Weaver, Vernon, 61, North Canton, Ohio, died March 29. Spouse: Ida Mae Weaver. Other survivors: children Bobby, Connie Waggoner; two grandchildren. Funeral: April 1 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Weldy, Levon Ray, 80, Wakarusa, Ind., died April 27 of complications from multiple sclerosis. Spouse: Grace Bixler Weldy. Parents: Charles and Pearl Hygema Weldy (deceased). Other survivors: children Bonnie Miesel, Fred, Frank; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 1 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Widrick, Loyd, 80, Adams, N.Y., died April 30. Spouse: Leona Jutzi (deceased). Parents: Joel and Emma Widrick (deceased). Survivors: children Clifford, John, Robert, Douglas, Rodney, Terrance, Ortha Georgakis, Cynthia, Brenda Richer; 28 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at First Mennonite of New Bremen, N.Y.

Yoder, Amos Jay, 87, Barhamsville, Va., died March 13. Spouse: Mabel Smucker Yoder (deceased). Parents: Luman and Melissa Ralston Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret Fries, Harold, Marion Delagrange, Dorothy Miller; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

Yoder, John, 85, Ephrata, Pa., died April 10. Spouse: (1st) Agnes Kauffman (deceased); (2nd) Ada Kurtz. Parents: Jesse and Sadie Yoder Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Vernon, John, Glenn, Gladys Martin, Carol Jean Beiler, Fern Bauman, Janie Yutzy; 19 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 13 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Zook, Benjamin, 76, Belleville, Pa., died April 25. Spouse: Martha Byler Zook. Parents: Israel and Katie Mae Yoder Zook (deceased). Other survivors: children Thomas, Raymond, Benjamin, Paul, Lois Peachey; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 28 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Help Your Congregation Develop a Vision for Ministry in the Next Century

Envisioning a New Mennonite Church
Introducing a free study series for Mennonite congregations
For use only during September-October 1999

A new six-part study series will help congregations identify a vision for the church at the local and denominational levels and will encourage each participant to be an active part of God's mission in the world. Each lesson will include worship resources, a Bible study, background about the church and society, a discussion guide, and questions for response.

Classes and groups that participate will be asked to share with integration planners their vision for the new Mennonite Church in their community and churchwide. Congregational responses will help shape a denominational vision for the new church, and churchwide services needed to support the ministry and mission of local congregations.

For use in
- *Adult and youth Sunday school classes*
- *Sunday morning worship themes*
- *Small groups, cell groups and house churches*
- *Congregational and church council retreats*
- *Men's and women's groups*
- *Special Sunday or Wednesday evening series*

"The study will equip Mennonite congregations for future ministry and give them an opportunity to help shape the new Mennonite Church."
—James Schrag, General Conference general secretary

"I like what this study offers—thoughtful background material, biblical framework, and assignments for response."
—Louise Wideman, co-pastor, Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

"This is something I can feel good about promoting in my conference."
—Miriam Martin, administrator, Atlantic Coast Conference

This new study series will be introduced at St. Louis 99 and distributed in late July for use in September-October 1999. Three free copies are available for your congregation. Additional copies will be available for $1/copy. Photocopies of this 32-page booklet are encouraged. For more information or an outline of the series and a sample first chapter, call the MC General Board at (219) 294-7131 or e-mail <rbyler@juno.com>

classifieds

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has a teaching position available in ***English*** beginning August 1999. Contact Richard Thomas, Lancaster Mennonite High School, 2176 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602; 717-299-0436; fax 717-299-0823; email thomasjr@lmhs.com

- **Lake Center Christian School**, a K-8 Mennonite school enrolling 370 students in the Akron/Canton area, is currently accepting applications for the following positions starting with the 1999-2000 school year: ***librarian, J.H. English, J.H. math and elementary classroom***.

  Please contact Matthew R. McMullen at 330-877-2049 for an application, or send resume to 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, accredited K-8, Lancaster, Pa., is seeking teacher applicants for full-time positions: ***middle school science; middle school language arts***, and part-time ***4th- and 5th-grade teachers***, beginning August 1999. Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- **Hesston College** seeks ***art instructor*** to teach painting, drawing, graphic design, photography and art appreciation courses. Qualifications: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church. Teaching experience required. Master of fine arts degree preferred. Full-time position available August 11.

  Contact Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes**, a growing continuing care retirement community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs. Master's in divinity, CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resume with salary requirements to 215-723-9876, attn. Lisa Peirce; or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city Christian elementary school, is seeking applications for full-time ***director of development***. Minimum requirement a bachelor's degree in business, marketing, communications, education or similar field. Marketing or development experience desirable. Seeking self-motivated individual with strong communication and organizational skills, sensitivity, respect and ability to relate to a diverse constituency, and a belief in the mission of CMLC. Applications will be accepted until July 16. Targeted starting date Sept. 13.

  Send letter of application and resume to Marvin Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For more information, call 773-735-9304.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***men's and women's head coach, cross country***, a part-time position beginning July 1999 for the 1999-2000 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work could start earlier. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student-athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budget and schedule. Could also assist in track and field. Master's degree preferred with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the collegiate level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, vice president for academic affairs and academic dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Goshen College strongly encourages applications from members of under-represented groups.

- **Mennonite Board of Missions** (MBM) seeks applicants for ***Latin America director*** (jointly administered with COM) to develop the capabilities of the Mennonite church in its mission in Latin America for witness, nurture and healing. Responsibilities include administration of programs, developing relationships with Latin American Mennonite conferences and North American missions involved in Latin America for future mission partnerships, representing MBM and COM in other organizations for purposes of liaison, program coordination and to constituency. Qualifications include passion for God's reconciling mission to the world, commitment to Mennonite-Anabaptist belief and practice, prior cross-cultural experience in mission or service, and understanding of Mennonite denominational structures. Training in Anabaptist theology, missiology and Latin American studies preferred. Fluency in Spanish and English required. Personal qualities of sensitivity, compassion and abilities in relationships and team building are important.

  Send letter of interest along with resume to Rachel L. Stoltzfus, MBM, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515; 219-294-7523; email rachells@MBM.org

- **Oaklawn Outpatient Services** in Elkhart, Ind., has openings for experienced ***clinical social workers*** who enjoy working with children and families. Provide social assessments and therapy services to families and children; work with schools, social service agencies, courts and families to identify and meet needs of children and youth; competitive salary and fringe benefits. If you have an MSW, clinical experience working with families, and Indiana licensure, please contact us.

  Contact Oaklawn, 330 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527; 800-282-0809. EEO/AA

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***kindergarten teacher*** (full day program) beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. Penn View is affiliated with the Mennonite churches in southeastern Pennsylvania and serves 560 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

  Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196.

Position Opening:
Dean of the Seminary

Beginning date: July 1, 2000

Qualifications: Doctoral degree in a discipline related to theological education, knowledge of the Mennonite Church, ability to cultivate broad working relationships within EMU and across the church, commitment to Mennonite faith and way of life, creative vision for Mennonite theological education, leadership and administrative skills, and teaching ability.

Application deadline: Aug. 1, 1999

Contact:

Joseph L. Lapp, President
Eastern Mennonite University
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
Phone: 540-432-4100 • Fax: 540-432-4444
E-mail: *lappj@emu.edu*

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by Rich Preheim

Setting the record straight

Media watchdog magazine *Brill's Content* has come to the defense of Jerry Falwell and his Tinky Winky troubles. It seems his magazine was not the first to out the purple-clad, purse-carrying character from PBS's *Teletubbies* TV show.

To a great public outcry, Falwell's *National Liberty Journal* in February printed a "parents alert" that Tinky Winky, supposedly a male, had become a favorite of homosexual groups. Tinky Winky's features—purple color (gay-pride color), purse (effeminate) and antenna shaped like a triangle (gay-pride symbol)—"are no doubt intentional," the magazine said.

But *Brill's Content* says at least a dozen media outlets had previously dubbed Tinky Winky as gay. Among them: The July 20, 1998, *Time* noted the character in a story on transsexual behavior moving into the mainstream. The Dec. 28, 1998 issue of *People* said, "Gay men have made the purse-toting Tinky Winky a camp icon." And a month before *National Liberty Review's* story, the *Washington Post* pronounced Tinky Winky as the new gay icon.

Still singing

Marsha Stevens has been called the mother of contemporary Christian music, and she helped popularize praise choruses for worship. She wrote "For Those Tears I Died," one of the most popular Christian folk songs to emerge out of the 1960s, becoming a standard in many circles.

Yet Stevens' mail often includes pages of her famous composition ripped out of songbooks. She is a lesbian in a committed relationship—and a conservative, evangelical Christian. "A Jesus-loving, Bible-believing, God-fearing, lesbian Christian," the March 17 issue of *The Christian Century* calls her.

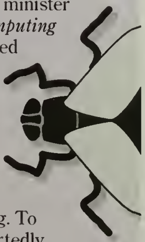
Stevens came out of the closet after the disintegration of her seven-year marriage to Russ Stevens, who had been a fellow bandmate in Children of the Day, arguably the first contemporary Christian music group.

Since then, Stevens has virtually disappeared at the same time Christian contemporary music has enjoyed unprecedented success. The industry media ignores her and promoters downplay her. Meanwhile, she still records and tours.

"It's not for you to decide whether I'm a wheat or a tare," she says. "Am I sharing the gospel? That's the question. I love our Lord and I will sing for him and witness for him till the day I die. Then, if he says I'm a tare and sends me to hell, so be it."

Y2K watch: One man against the world

Steve Hewitt has had enough, says *Evangelical Visitor.* An ordained minister and editor of *Christian Computing Magazine*, Hewitt has started a campaign to dispel the Y2K sensationalistic hype created by many in the Christian community. He will pay his way to travel anywhere in the country to soothe believers' anxieties about the bug. To which James Dobson reportedly responded to Hewitt: "You're outnumbered, man. I'm sorry."



Release for the captives

Early inmates of the infamous Sing Sing prison were used for quarrying marble in the hills overlooking the Hudson River near New York City. Now some inmates are using rock of a different sort to create a new foundation for life.

Since 1994, more than 60 men have received degrees from a "seminary-behind-walls" program at Sing Sing. The one-year, 36-credit, college-level certificate in ministry program is accredited by New York Theological Seminary.

"I came into prison as a Christian, but it was the seminary program that opened my eyes to the social aspect of the gospel," Terry Reed tells *Sojourners.* He is a Sing Sing inmate who earned a master of theology degree while in prison and now teaches "Sociology and Religious Communities."

Similar programs have now been started in other New York prisons. Some graduates are now on the outside, working in social services and legal professions, among others.

Garbage in, Christians out

This church really is a dump. Amid the waste of the Muqattam Mountain garbage dump near Cairo, Egypt, is a vibrant Coptic Orthodox congregation. Between 6,000 and 8,000 garbage workers, most of them younger than 30, meet together for weeknight Bible studies, reports *CityVoices.* A cave in the mountain has become a church seating 10,000 people.

Yet one more example of finding the heavenly good news in the lowest, dirtiest places on earth.

Tidbits

- **Last year 447 billion hours were spent in evangelism around the world.—*Holiness Today***
- **In addition to its biblical references, the concept of Jubilee is also found in Native American cultures. —*The Catalyst***
- **Angels appear 148 times in the Old Testament, 74 times in the New Testament and 987,000 in modern-day books and publications and on TV.—*Joyful Noiseletter***
- **Due to tight government regulation, Canada had only one Christian radio station from 1949 to 1994. There are now three. —*Wireless Age***

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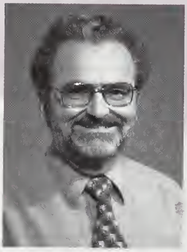

J. Lorne Peachey

'Fear not!'

What must it have been like to be one of the children of Israel during the events described in Numbers 13 and 14? Poised on the edge of the promised land, it had to be a real rush to anticipate being part of the fulfillment of generations of dreams about a covenant with God.

Then came the report from the 12 sent to spy out the future. Two said that, sure, there were problems, but, with God's help, Israel should go for it. Ten said that the difficulties outweighed projected benefits and that the people were better off with what they knew.

Israel chose to listen to the 10, unleashing God's wrath in one of the most graphic descriptions of that anger we have in the Bible. Because of their fear of moving ahead, of following the dream, God condemned Israel to wander aimlessly for 40 years in the wilderness.

Why? In his book *Everything Belongs* (Crossroad, 1999), Richard Rohr notes that the words "fear not!" form the most common one-line directive we have in the Bible. God is not pleased with fear because fear shows a lack of faith, of trust.

We who are members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) might ask if we are at a similar juncture in relation to integration.

We must make the next two years a time of learning about those who believe and behave differently than we do and of building trust in the integrity and sincerity of each other.

That journey began in earnest four years ago at Wichita 95, when GC delegates voted by 93 percent and MC delegates by 73 percent to explore union. Two years later, in Winnipeg and Orlando, respectively, 96 percent of GCs and 98 percent of MCs said they were ready to consider plans for a common structure. That bold vote surprised even those who had been working for years at the possibility of merger.

Today boldness seems to have given way to caution. The issue, of course, is membership. Who can belong to the new Mennonite Church? Who gets to decide?

Members of the joint GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada general boards had revised membership guidelines on their agenda when they met in South Bend, Ind., last month. These guidelines call for membership decisions to be made by area conferences in the new denomination.

In straw votes in separate caucuses, Canadian board members said they were ready to go with these guidelines. Not all U.S. board members were, however; 40 percent voted no. They were concerned about the possibility that area conferences might decide differently on membership as it relates to homosexuality.

As a result, U.S. delegates to St. Louis 99 in July likely won't get to vote on membership. Instead, the boards decided, they will receive the guidelines "for first reading and study." A decision on them by the U.S. part of the church isn't scheduled for at least another two years, when delegates meet again.

Legitimate concerns bring about this two-year delay. Several area conferences, among them the largest MC conference, have said they aren't sure they will become part of a new denomination that might be open in some places to noncelibate homosexuals as members. Leaders of other conferences, among them one of the larger GC districts, have said they are unsure of a merger that would put membership decisions in the hands of a few denominational leaders. Given current disagreements, what was supposed to be a move toward unity could end up splintering us into even more groups than we have today.

But we must not allow legitimate concerns to become irrational fears. They will if we concentrate on our differences, our misunderstandings and our dissimilar approaches to structures, polity and decision making. Allowing fears to grow and go unchecked, we could soon find ourselves wandering in the wilderness of God's wrath.

Instead, we must make these two years a time of learning about those who believe and behave differently than we do and a time of building trust in the integrity and sincerity of each other. Faith in the God who brought us to this journey will make it possible for us to do that—and much more. This is the God who continues to come to us with the words, "Fear not!"—*jlp*

the Mennonite

June 1, 1999

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from the burden of debt

page 4

6 Peace awakens the curiosity of the world
8 Hispanic women celebrate 25 years
15 A call to join the ecumenical movement
16 What to do with the enemy we need

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

No excuses

Re "A Bug's Life—and Death" (editorial, May 11): My niece was neither a bug nor an insecticidal force. My niece was the one seeking out, befriending, helping one boy do "what was right when I wanted to do wrong" (quote from her killer). My niece was the first one murdered at her school because was she trying to be a friend one last time. She was trying to talk the boy into putting down the gun.

"Thou shall not kill" is a commandment, no matter what one thinks or feels.

In all my years of working with children, I have never allowed teasing, and I have never allowed retaliation for being teased. I have always tried to help children express their thoughts and feelings in ways that do not hurt themselves or others. I have also helped children look at all choices they have in response to a specific situation.

The teenagers involved in the Columbine incident and other school shootings had other choices. They are responsible for their choice and acting on it. If they are not held accountable for their violent acts now, when will they be expected to take responsibility for them? Admitting that one is wrong precedes repentance. Repentace must come before forgiveness. Absolving these teenagers of their full responsibility in committing murder and injury in no way helps the healing process or hope for reconciliation.—*Name and address withheld*

Resolve or fragment

The longer the integration process goes, the more it becomes apparent that the basic problem is not the issue of polity (of which the membership question is only a secondary issue). The primary problem is one no one wants to discuss. This problem is not isolated to the General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church or Conference of Mennonites in Canada. This problem has to do with the application of theology. We are divided into two camps. These two styles have been with us for more than 40 years. Over time, the distance between these two camps has increased. Each claims to be the proper expression of the God of the Bible.

This is how these two styles are expressed:

1. Bible: *Written by God through human agency using the laws of lingustics.* God's attributes: *Remain the same, do not change.* God's standard of morality for human beings: *This does not change. This remains the same throughout history. This remains the same from culture to culture.* How does one accept God? *One comes to God on God's terms.* One word description of this type of theology: *Absolute.*

2. Bible: *Written by inspired people of God and subject to one's interpretation.* God's attributes: *They change with time and experience. God is growing and developing.* God's standard of morality for human beings: *Like God, this too changes with time, culture and education.* How does one accept God? *One accepts God in light of one's own understanding.* One word description of this type of theology: *Relative.*

Until these two views are seriously addressed, I do not see integration coming to a fruitful end. If they are not seriously addressed, the only logical end will be further fragmentation within our Mennonite denominations.—*Walt Clinton, Casselton, N.D.*

The company they keep

In his letter in the May 11 issue, Harley Hofstetter called people I referred to in my April 20 article ("Against the System") "disreputable kooks" and lumped them with those who bomb abortion clinics.

It is obvious that Hofstetter has never met people who have been involved with the Plowshares actions or the witness against Extremely Low Frequency communication towers in northern Wisconsin. If he had, he would see the loving and gentle way they interact with law enforcement officials. (The sheriff in northern Wisconsin has been known to come out and have a s'more with the protesters the night before they commit civil disobedience and he arrests them.)

As for their being "disreputable kooks," that's basically why Stephen was stoned and Christ crucified, right?—*Kathleen Kern, Webster, N.Y.*

The business of integration

In the article "Dwindling Reserves Hamper COM Work" (May 4), the statement is made, "At the board's direction, as it anticipated integration, [Commission on Overseas Mission] has been using up its reserves to expand program."

I hope this is a poor choice of words. This suggests that COM consciously chose a strategy so it would enter the new integrated church with depleted reserves and with obligations to support programs which might exceed annual contributions. This is a bit like a man who is anticipating marriage spending all his savings on down payments, incurring debts to be paid off after the marriage at rates beyond the couple's income.

It would seem to me a more prudent and

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readers say

faithful approach would be for church agencies to make decisions so they would enter the new integrated church with reasonable reserves and levels of programs that will not strain the new partnership. This is particularly important since there will be significant expenses for agencies to integrate, and it is possible that contributions will decline, hopefully only in the short term, or shift among various programs as people develop new loyalties and relationships.

I would welcome further clarification of this particular situation and further information about the business and financial aspects of integration in future articles.—*John W. Eby, Dillsburg, Pa.*

What is true Christian love?

Is true Christian love (a) offering an alcoholic a bottle of booze or (b) offering a helping hand, God's truth and the power of the Holy Spirit to help an alcoholic battle and overcome this condition?

Is true Christian love (a) accepting people just as they are or (b) accepting people just as they are and communicating biblical truths, God's righteousness, the earthly and eternal consequences of our sin, etc.?

Is true Christian love (a) giving anything to children they want, even when they may cry, throw fits, whine, compare themselves to other families, cry injustice, etc. or (b) giving hugs and caring for children while teaching them right and wrong, explaining meanings of rules and how rules protect us, disciplining them, etc.?

Is true Christian love (a) accepting everything that comes our way for the sake of unity and peace or (b) understanding others and their opinions while confronting the sin and wrongs of the world, incorrect teaching/doctrine, etc., much like the early Anabaptists? —*Charles Smoker, Lancaster, Pa.*

Cover photo by Ryan Beiler

Forgive us our debt

What do the Pope, Jesse Jackson and Bono of the rock group U2 have in common?

by Ryan Beiler

A thorough reading of the Scriptures reveals that the concept of Jubilee, including the cancellation of debts, is a consistent and vital theme.

Reactions to the impending millennium both fascinate and frighten me. Computer glitch prognostications and creative end-times theories make for an entertaining mix of paranoia and anxious anticipation. How should we respond?

Personally, I'm counting on the Y2K bug to wipe out my student debts—which leads me to my next question: What do the Pope, Jesse Jackson and Bono of the rock group U2 have in common? All support Jubilee 2000, the international campaign to cancel the crushing debts of developing nations worldwide by the end of this year. Perhaps these people are not sources of moral authority for you. Perhaps the idea of canceling debts—even for nations like Tanzania, which must spend nine times more on debt payments than on health care—seems idealistic at best, or even unfair.

Maybe Amartya Sen, Jubilee supporter and Nobel Prize winner for economics, can convince you—or maybe you trust that bastion of market capitalism, the *Wall Street Journal*, which also proclaimed its support for relieving unsustainable debt. Or how about 54 members of Congress who signed a letter urging President Clinton to cancel debts for Central American countries devastated by Hurricane Mitch? Do these figures lend credibility?

If not, then how about Jesus: "If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? … Lend, expecting nothing in return" (Luke 6:34, 35). A thorough reading of the Scriptures reveals that the concept of Jubilee, including the cancellation of debts, is a consistent and vital theme.

According to John Howard Yoder (*The Politics of Jesus*), in the Lord's Prayer "the Greek text signifies precisely a monetary debt, in the most material sense of the term. … Jesus is not simply recommending vaguely that we might pardon those who have bothered us or made us trouble, but tells us purely and simply to erase the debts of those who owe us money; which is to say, practice the Jubilee."

Of course, the same principle applies to sins and personal conflicts. However, limiting "forgive us our debts" to purely spiritual matters makes the disturbing statement that sins can certainly be forgiven, but nothing as sacred as a monetary debt—especially a big one—should be erased. Instead, Jubilee reinforces the simple truth that our neighbors' needs, spiritual and physical, are more important than money.

In Old Testament law, Jubilee was a way of ensuring that wealth (which really belongs to God anyway) would never be concentrated in the hands of a few at the expense of many. Deuteronomy 15 and Leviticus 25 describe how debts were to be remitted, slaves freed and the land given rest at regular intervals in order to maintain economic and social health.

Starvation wages: Forcing heavily indebted poor countries to repay their debts has the opposite effect: scarce funds are diverted from human needs to wealthy creditor nations, impoverished citizens are forced to accept starvation wages as their countries attempt to attract investment with cheap labor, and the environment is ravaged as natural resources are exploited for quick cash.

Other issues compound the injustice of the debt crisis. Before Hurricane Mitch, Honduras was spending more on debt service than its budget for health and education combined. Structural adjustment policies (SAPs—see box, page 5), which accompany most loans, forced cuts in social spending, including emergency response and civil defense, thus multiplying the tragedy of a natural disaster.

The international response to Mitch was encouraging but inadequate, especially in the case of the United States. Our government's proposal of a three-year moratorium on debt payments for affected countries—while interest continues to accumulate—is typical of the response of creditor nations. The reform policies of programs such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and international financial institutions (IFIs—see box, page 5) such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, to whom most poor countries are indebted, are geared more toward minimizing loss to creditors than maximizing benefits for debtors—creating sustainable debt instead of sustainable development.

Contact Jubilee2000/USA (202-783-3566 or www.j200usa.org), a coalition of faith-based organizations (including Mennonite Central Committee) for information and suggestions on what to do. Or contact Bread for the World (301-608-2400, www.bread.org) for Jubilee kits tailor-made for church-based activism. Or write your senator, representative or the president asking them to support Jubilee legislation for debt relief.

At last count, MCC had received 50,000 buckets containing medical and hygienic supplies for victims of Hurricane Mitch. I witnessed firsthand the profound gratitude with which they were received. Imagine now, that for each bucket sent to Central America, we wrote a letter to our government. Most politicians consider one letter to represent the views of 1,000 people who didn't write. Those 50,000 letters would represent the voices of 50 million constituents—a powerful statement. Then imagine the gratitude of not only Central America but of brothers and sisters all over the world as their countries are released from their burden of debt.—*Ryan Beiler*

That said, the debt crisis even hurts creditor nations. Environmental damage resulting from rain forest destruction and industrial pollution, as poor countries earn export cash in any way possible, has global consequences. Countries driven deeper into poverty are less able to buy U.S. products, stifling development of overseas markets. And the race to the bottom for cheap labor draws U.S. jobs to countries whose only investment appeal is an oppressed work force. In many indebted countries, impoverished farmers turn to illegal drug production in order to survive—drugs that wind up on U.S. streets. All this, to say nothing of the moral consequences of placing financial priorities over human need.

Some support the intention of Jubilee—alleviating poverty—while questioning its practical effects—the possibility of encouraging fiscal irresponsibility among debtor nations. In the past, debt structures certainly benefited corrupt officials, bloated militaries and economic elites. A step toward sound economic and social policies is the inclusion of broad public participation in transparent democratic processes.

Already many of the dictatorships that incurred crushing debts have been replaced by at least nominally democratic governments held accountable by a voting public. With the heavy social price these countries have paid for their indebtedness—as with common bankruptcy cases—it is unlikely they will repeat past mistakes. Proposed Jubilee legislation seeks to ensure that implementation of debt relief is reached democratically, including provisions rendering ineligible countries with gross human rights violations, drug trafficking or excessive military spending.

Former Nazis: Debt cancellation has been successful in the past. Germany had two-thirds of its World War II debts canceled in 1953. In 1991, the United States canceled $2.5 billion of Poland's debt. And Egypt was rewarded for its Gulf War support with a $7 billion cancellation. If we can forgive former Nazis in the interest of international growth and stability, why not the heavily indebted nations of Africa, Latin America and Asia?

Moreover, according to Mennonite Central Committee's booklet "Response to the International Debt Crisis": "In most cases ... countries have repaid more than the amount of the original loans plus the originally agreed upon interest charges. ...The original debt has been paid; it is both impossible and wrong to enforce greater sacrifices on poor people in debtor countries." Creditor nations, therefore, have been fairly compensated, and official responses aimed at repayment under strict conditions are like asking these nations to build bricks without straw. "Pay us back," they say, "but without spending adequate funds on education or health care to develop a society capable of paying us back." The solution is liberation: Jubilee.

Take action. Write letters (see box, page 4).

The apostle Paul wrote, "I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need" (2 Corinthians 8:13-14a). Though the debts owed by poor nations are insurmountable to them, the amounts are small in comparison with the wealth of Western nations. Canceling these debts will not harm our economy, and in today's increasingly interconnected world, it will benefit all. While some forecast doom with the coming millennium, let us, as Jesus in Luke 4:19, "proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Let us proclaim Jubilee.

Ryan Beiler lives in Washington, D.C.

Though the debts owed by poor nations are insurmountable to them, the amounts are small in comparison to the wealth of Western nations.

The ABCs of IFIs and SAPs

In the early 1970s, Western banks swollen with oil revenues encouraged developing countries to borrow heavily. Many loans were squandered on personal schemes of corrupt dictatorships, military buildup or irresponsible development projects.

A global recession in the late '70s sent prices for agriculture and minerals—the main source of revenue for most developing nations—plunging. These countries were then forced to borrow more to keep up payments, despite skyrocketing interest rates.

Eventually international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) intervened in the early '80s, offering loans to help these countries pay their interest. Established in 1944 at the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, these institutions exist ostensibly to provide credit for economic development worldwide and are controlled according to member contributions. Most loans from IFIs are conditional on the implementation of strict measures or structural adjustment policies (SAPs) aimed at making countries economically viable.

SAPs sometimes succeed in improving governments' budget situations by shrinking deficits and maintaining debt payments but usually at excruciating social cost. SAPs generally promote currency devaluation, reduced social spending, wage suppression, tax increases, credit restrictions, business deregulation and the shifting of production from goods for domestic needs to production for export. SAPs tend to benefit economic elites and foreign investors, while disproportionately hurting the poor.

The other problem with SAPs is the way they function largely as a tool of unjust foreign control. A Honduran priest I spoke with said it plainly: "The U.S. [government] is not giving aid because they love the Central American people; they give to protect their interests." The United States, with only 5 percent of the world's population, controls 17 percent of World Bank votes and 18 percent of IMF votes—more than any other nation. The need to make debt payments forces governments to choose between financial obligations to wealthy creditor nations and social obligations to their most vulnerable citizens. The boys with whom I shoveled Hurricane Mitch's dirt from homes last January joke about how the United States owns Honduras.—*Ryan Beiler*

Aiden Schlichting Enns

Peace awakens the curiosity of the world

We reach God's vision for the world by living it now.

by Peter Stucky

One week here in Colombia, several armed men boarded a bus, walked to the back and shot dead two people who worked with the Committee of Solidarity with Political Prisoners. All indications point to executions by a paramilitary group. These groups are private armies working in collaboration with the national army and police. The bus was driving through territory they control. About the same time, gunmen walked into an office of a peace, human rights and conciliation Nongovernmental Organization in Medellín and kidnapped four staff people. Later the recognized head of the paramilitary groups in Colombia issued a statement saying these kidnapped men and women were prisoners of war. He declared that his organization was going to "purify" the organizations working in human rights. Aside from our friendship with this NGO, those threats come very close to our work as Mennonites here in Colombia and to many other folks as well.

Christian hope, although firmly grounded in reality, is based on what God is doing and will do.

This is nothing new. We have had a war, or series of wars, going on in Colombia for the past 50 years. That's all many of us have known in our lifetime. Our government is rotten to the core, our society is built on inequality and social injustice, we have two powerful guerrilla groups who control large areas of the country, there's a great deal of common delinquency, in addition to the paramilitary ingredient mentioned above. Already there are more than 1 million people who have been displaced from their land and are wandering from one place to another, disenfranchised and rejected. Although a table for dialogues that might lead to peace has been installed, knowledgeable people talk of 10 years as a realistic time frame.

What this adds up to is an extremely complicated picture in which our Colombian Mennonite Church is seeking to witness and minister. But it's not easy to keep the issues clear, the work focused, the vision and will to contribute to our country's transformation high. Toward the end of last year, a much loved member of Teusaquillo Mennonite Church, which I pastor, had to leave the country with his adolescent son and young daughter, fleeing for his life. He worked in the defense of Native peoples' rights. At this point we are concerned for the lives of at least two other members of our congregation. Although many of us in Colombia have to a large extent lost our fear of death, the question is, Where can we find strength, hope and orientation to keep going in the right direction?

At the outset I might say that optimism and hope are not the same thing. Hope can look things in the face with all their pain and ugliness and not try to disguise or cover them up. Christian hope, although firmly grounded in reality, is based on what God is doing and will do. God may act through servants or agents, be they Christian or not, or through acts of sovereign intervention.

Where do I get hope? The passage I have returned to time and again over the past few years to renew my vision and hope is Micah 4:1-5. One of the principles of teaching is that if you want to emphasize something, you repeat it. This passage is found almost word for word in Isaiah 2:2-5 (Micah expands it a bit). That should give us a clue that it is something important for us.

This passage serves as a map for me. Maps are important because they show us where we are going and how to get there. Micah 4 tells me where humanity is headed and the role of the people of God. It shows us our destiny and helps keep us on the right path. It's God's map

We've asked various people throughout the Mennonite world what changes they have made in their lives in the last two years because of their involvement with God's Word. Their replies have appeared in this series called Transformations.
—Editors

Micah points to the final destiny of history as the work of God, and we are collaborators with God to make it real.

for us, our utopia. It gives us hope. Although the Bible includes many expressions of God's perspective as to where we are headed, this one excites and encourages me.

Some 800 years before Christ, this Hebrew prophet articulated for all of humanity God's vision for the world. Micah is saying: "This is God's project, and it's in that direction that we must work."

Micah 4 describes an attractive world where nations decide their disagreements and resolve their differences not by who is stronger but by justice—not a justice accommodated to human interests but according to God's justice. This is good news to small nations in the Two-Thirds World such as Iraq, Panama and Afghanistan.

It speaks of a world without wars, defense departments or armies. The economies are transformed from investing billions and billions in arms of destruction—with all the social consequences that entails—into industries that produce life and well-being: food and basic goods.

It describes the delicious effects of those changes on society. All people will live without fear: the poor, Native peoples, African-Americans, children, women, disabled folks, peasants, urban dwellers, the weak, people in the Northern Hemisphere and people in the Southern Hemisphere. All people will be able to enjoy a simple life but one full of meaning in friendship, in community, at home under their fruit trees.

The prophet says these are the words of God Almighty. This means they are not idle words, because the words of God are creative words that carry in them their own dynamism and contain not only the idea but the achievement of the idea. Our God speaks, and it comes to pass. This is our destiny. It shouldn't come as a surprise that this passage is important to us here.

In a world, a country, torn apart by warfare, exploitation, discrimination and injustices, who is going to say clearly, without ambiguities, that peace is the will of God, that peace is what God wants and, what is more, that peace is possible? That justice and right is the will of God, is what God wants and is possible? That human dignity and respect for all people is the will of God, is what God wants and is possible? That human coexistence in community is the will of God, is what God wants and is possible? What a joy it is to find a people, a church, that keeps this vision before the world, that articulates it clearly and works to make it possible.

But lest we think all this is pure theory, let's look at the passage once again. Micah 4:2 says that "many nations shall come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the ... house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' " The nations of the world are realizing that their policies are bankrupt, that they need teaching, that they require orientation to improve life on earth.

Where do they go? They turn to the people of God. We, the people of God, are sitting on a great treasure. It is the secret of how to live together in peace, justice and well-being for all peoples. And the rest of the world wants to know the secret.

Why do the nations go up to the mountain of the Lord's house to learn of God's ways? It is because they have seen a people modeling this way of life, demonstrating what it's like to live under God's rule and walking in God's paths. It is a concrete sociological group, a real and specific group living God's way. And the rest of the world sees the attractive results. A group of people—the church—living this way of life awakens the curiosity and the thirst of the world around. The announcement or proclamation is important, but it becomes credible through tangible example.

We, the people of God, are sitting on a great treasure. It is the secret of how to live together in peace, justice and well being for all peoples. And the rest of the world wants to know the secret.

Micah points to the final destiny of history as the work of God, and we are collaborators with God to make it real. We reach God's vision for the world by living it now. The utopia is part of the path to get there. And the way we get there is a component of our final destiny.

The passage ends by saying we will reach this goal when we take seriously the God of Jesus, when we take seriously God's project and God's way of achieving it. Having Jesus as our norm is, of course, a later Christian understanding. Others will try to make things come out right by other means, "but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever" (Micah 4:5b).

Peter Stucky is pastor of Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá, Colombia.

Hispanic Mennonite women's organization celebrates 25 years of work by the Holy Spirit

MOLINE, Ill.—Mac Bustos walked when Sociedad de Damas Cristianas en Acción (SDCA) was born.

SDCA, the Hispanic Mennonite women's organization, held its first conference April 14, 1973, at Moline's Spanish Mennonite Church. That evening, as the 60 participants were preparing for a worship service, Maria Bustos was surprised to see her husband carried in. Once an active pastor, Mac was now homebound due to diabetes. Doctors were suggesting the amputation of both of his legs, which were paralyzed, and he endured great suffering, despite powerful prescription painkillers.

During Communion, as the women surrounded Mac in prayer, he suddenly stood up and walked, leaving his pain medication on the steps leading to the altar. He had been healed.

"God showed us in that first meeting that what we were doing was from God," Maria Bustos, of Goshen, Ind., told the 200 participants at this year's convention, held May 13-16 and celebrating SDCA's 25th anniversary. (The observance was a year late because the gatherings are only held every other year.)

Mac Bustos returned to active ministry, serving until his death in 1988. Meanwhile, the fledgling organization, which started as a meeting of pastors' wives, has grown to bring together Hispanic Mennonite women for friendship, support and especially worship.

An emphasis on the Holy Spirit has continued, if not grown stronger, through the years. The women rocked their meeting place—a campground near Moline—with animated clapping, jingling tambourines, dancing and singing. Some women spoke in tongues while others laid hands on their sisters in Christ, praying fervently for spiritual and physical healing during extended periods of worship.

Participants came from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, many of them traveling great distances to attend. A contingent from British Columbia drove three 15-hour days, picking up women in Alberta along the way. Past gatherings have even drawn participants from Costa Rica.

In a traditionally male-dominated culture, SDCA enables Hispanic Mennonite women to develop and use their gifts in the church, says conference coordinator Juanita Nuñez. Women now have opportunities to speak and teach, she noted, and the Hispanic representative on the new Mennonite Church's U.S. board is a woman.

"Jesus is giving us the freedom that our culture didn't give us," says Nuñez, who lives in Apopka, Fla.

Now SDCA, which in English means Society of Christian Women in Action, wants to broaden its ministry. During the convention's business meeting, the executive committee was authorized to pursue one outreach during the next two years. Suggestions included a prison ministry, scholarships for Hispanic Mennonite women, helping organize a Mexican Mennonite women's group and financial aid to Hispanics to attend Mennonite youth conferences.

In its early years, SDCA needed to beg funds from other agencies for its conventions. Now the organization's financial situation is stable enough that members approved sending a $200 love offering to their parent body, the Mennonite Church's Hispanic Mennonite Convention.—*Emily Will*

Participants at the 1999 convention of Sociedad de Damas Cristianas en Acción spanned the generations, from 5-month-old Leslie Rios of Muscatine, Iowa, to Maria Gutierrez of Davenport, Iowa, who is in her 70s (both pictured above). The oldest person at the gathering was 90-year-old Maria Medina from Moline, Ill.

Photos by Emily Will (2)

During the 25th anniversary celebration of Sociedad de Damas Cristianas en Acción, Maria Bustos (left) and Maria Luisa Rivera Snyder look at photos from the first conference of the Hispanic Mennonite women's organization. Bustos, of Goshen, Ind., and Snyder, of Hesston, Kan., were honored during the May 13-16 event as the group's founders. A third founder, Lupe Bustos of Goshen, was not at the convention.

Communities rally around Kosovars

But other needs deplete MCC material aid warehouses

AKRON, Pa.—Mary Ann Shisler wanted to gather 100 refugee kits. If she did, Mennonite Central Committee would come to Syracuse, N.Y., to pick them up, saving her a trip to MCC's warehouse in Ephrata, Pa.

What she—and MCC—got were more than 5,000 kits for Kosovar refugees, thanks to a tremendous response from Syracuse congregations, schools, office groups and individuals.

"People told me that they couldn't find any other organization that was taking goods," says Shisler, who initiated the effort in her Syracuse United Church of Christ congregation. "Everyone else is collecting money. Especially for children, a project collecting goods, something tangible, seems more effective."

MCC has collected more than 25,400 refugee kits since the start of the Kosovo conflict earlier this year. The agency has also received more than $1.35 million in contributions. Swiss Mennonites have promised 5,000 refugee kits and 80,000 Swiss francs ($54,400 U.S.).

But while a tremendous amount of support for Kosovar refugees has rolled into MCC, a record volume of other material resources for other needs has rolled out of MCC warehouses, leaving inventories low and lower-profile requests unmet.

By the time warehouses in Ephrata, Pa.; North Newton, Kan.; and Kitchener, Ont., closed on Friday, May 14, nearly half a million dollars worth of goods had been shipped out that week, destined for four countries.

"This has been the largest number of shipments to different countries in one week since I began working here in 1992," says Kevin King, MCC's material resources manager.

Victims of the Balkans conflict in Albania were sent nearly 6,000 refugee kits, 4,200 school kits and 99 cartons of toothpaste. But MCC is also trying to meet needs elsewhere. Among the items sent to the West Bank were 17,000 pounds of canned meat, 1,230 health kits, 1,139 pounds of clothing, 869 pounds of fabric, 864 pounds of bath soap and 450 school kits. The shipment to Nicaragua included 6,190 school kits, 2,266 health kits, 2,334 layettes and 1,911 pounds of bandages. Russia was sent 33,600 pounds of canned meat.

But MCC did not have enough school kits to complete the Nicaragua shipment. And the agency still needs to fill requests for 10,000 school kits for refugee children in Albania and 7,000 kits for Liberia. Demand for health kits is also exceeding supply.

"We're appealing to our churches to replenish our supply of health kits and school kits," King says. "Our congregations have been generous in responding to well-publicized needs after Hurricane Mitch and now in Albania. We also want to respond to our partners in lesser-known places, where poverty quietly takes a toll on the lives of people."

Last year, MCC provided $5.8 million worth of food for people in 32 countries and sent nearly $3.2 million worth of additional material resources assistance to 15 countries.

MCC's current response in the Balkans includes food, bedding and clothing for Kosovar refugees in Albania and Montenegro. Some of the goods have been shipped in while others have been purchased locally. Other plans include $30,000 for a project in Croatia breeding sheep to be given to resettling refugees.

"We're looking at a difficult, no-win situation," says MCC overseas director Ray Brubacher, who was in Albania May 8-11. "In a best-case scenario, the bombing stops and we will face an immense reconstruction need. Under a worst-case scenario, the people of Kosovo will not be able to return. They will face a life of uncertainty, displaced and without a homeland, or they will remain in refugee camps, a testament to intense hardships."
—MCC News Service

MCC photo by Sebastian Schulze

People from Plymouth United Church of Christ in Syracuse, N.Y., pack refugee kits to be sent by Mennonite Central Committee to Kosovar refugees. MCC has received more than 25,400 kits from across the United States and Canada, plus $1.35 million in contributions.

We also want to respond to our partners in lesser-known places, where poverty quietly takes a toll on the lives of people.

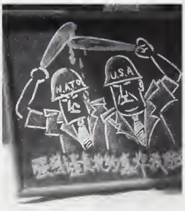
—Kevin King

Surveying the damage

Oklahoma Mennonite Disaster Service Unit chair Bill Mast and MDS communications coordinator Marisa Doncevic assess the destruction left in Del City, Okla., by a May 3 tornado, part of a storm that devastated areas of central Oklahoma and south central Kansas. MDS has established long-term project headquarters in Guthrie, Okla., and Augusta, Kan. Long-term leaders are expected to arrive in early June, and rotating volunteers will follow. In Oklahoma, MDS plans to respond in a number of communities around Guthrie. Workers have already started repair work in Mulhall, a small town north of Guthrie. In Kansas, MDS volunteers from their Augusta base will work in nearby Haysville and Wichita. MDS began work in Haysville the day after the tornadoes, drawing 8,100 volunteers during the first week.

MDS photo by Tom Smucker

Embassy bombing changes relationships for North American teachers in China



GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Part of a chalkboard sign on the campus of Henan Agricultural University in Zhengzhou, China, protesting the bombing of China's embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Two China Educational Exchange workers teach at the school.

BEIJING—U.S. teachers with China Educational Exchange recently experienced something new in the 18-year history of CEE: hostility and disillusionment based on their nationality.

The bombing by NATO planes of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, early on May 8 resounded quickly across China and resulted in massive student protests in the capital and other major cities. CEE workers, who teach English on university campuses around the country, began receiving news of the bombing on the evening of May 8.

In Luoyang, Chinese Foreign Affairs Office staff were waiting for the teachers after church the next day to make sure they had heard the news and were all right. At Luoyang Institute of Technology and other schools, they were encouraged to stay inside and away from the demonstrations occurring on most campuses.

"It feels like the Foreign Affairs Office has been really proactive, and that they have done a lot to make sure we still feel welcome here," says June Lantz, a CEE teacher in Luoyang. "But walking down the street also feels different now. People don't look at you quite the same."

Reaction from students varied. In Zhengzhou, Everett and Margaret Metzler encouraged their students to ask questions in response to the bombing. One student who works for a local newspaper interviewed the Metzlers.

"We were asked for our feelings and impressions about the embassy bombing," Everett Metzler says. "We said we believed it was a mistake, not done on purpose, although that didn't come out in the paper. We did say we were taken completely by surprise, and that was printed."

In Beijing, one CEE teacher walked into a classroom several evenings after the bombing to be confronted with anti-NATO slogans on the chalkboard.

Also in Beijing, CEE coordinators Kathi and Rod Suderman had many opportunities to talk with taxi drivers and with their teachers at the university.

"Each time, [the taxi drivers] would ask what country we were from," Kathi Suderman says. "After hearing it was Canada, they would launch into their tirade against the U.S. for having led the NATO forces into Yugoslavia and of course the bombing of the Chinese embassy. I did try to remind them once or twice that other countries were in on this offensive action, but that didn't seem to concern them."

She says two things struck her: the pain and disillusionment of the Chinese people, who had previously looked up to the United States as a staunch defender of human rights, and a new empathy she now feels with U.S. citizens.

"We have talked about the need to love all people, whether we agree with them or not," Suderman says. "That was usually easy to follow through on, but I confess we found it easier to criticize U.S. citizens simply because they were represented by a government we found much too aggressive. ... This incident has shown me that I need to understand U.S. citizens, as well as Chinese citizens, in a new way." *—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and CEE news services*

Bethel College recognizes four alumni

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—The Bethel College Alumni Association honored two church workers, an academician and a nurse at its annual alumni banquet May 22 on the North Newton campus. Edith Claassen Graber and O'Ray C. Graber received the Distinguished Achievement Joint Award, Marilyn Miller received the Outstanding Alumnus Award, and Naomi Rutschman received the Outstanding Nursing Alumnus Award.

Edith Graber, class of 1949, has taught sociology at three St. Louis-area colleges. Her areas of interest include law and society, the history of social theory, world population and women's studies. Her husband, O'Ray, also a 1949 graduate, is a former pastor. From 1970 to 1991, he was a regional director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Miller, class of 1960, is director of Outreach Ministries of the Commission on Home Ministries. The first woman ordained for pastoral ministry in the General Conference Mennonite Church, she planted a congregation in Arvada, Colo., and pastored one in Boulder.

Rutschman, a 1952 graduate of Bethel Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing and a 1958 Bethel graduate, worked nearly 50 years at Bethel Deaconess Hospital (now Newton Medical Center) in Newton, Kan. She has also been active in health-care organizations at the local and state levels.

Ghana seminary wants to train women

ELKHART, Ind.—Good News Theological College and Seminary in Accra, Ghana, has some good news for women wanting to join the ministry in that country: They are welcome.

The school, supported by Mennonite Board of Missions, is so serious about training women for the ministry that every woman who enrolls pays no tuition or lodging for the first year of study. But only one of the 22 full-time students at the seminary is a woman. Director Thomas Oduro attributes that number to the lack of adequate campus housing for women.—*MBM News Service*

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Photo by Jim Bishop

All wet

Ray Hurst, pastor at Community Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va., baptizes Tim Showalter May 16 in a pond at a local retreat center. Showalter was one of 10 young people baptized into the 170-member congregations.

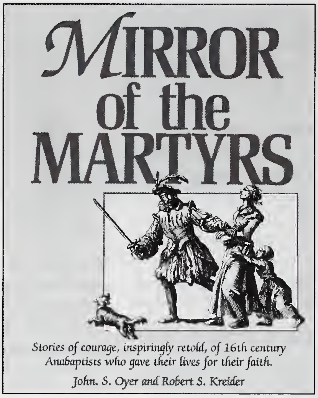
by the way ...

When asked in a 1998 survey under what circumstances they would consider switching to another denomination, 38 percent of General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada members said none. Another 13 percent said they didn't know.—*Parkwood Survey*

Stories of Courage — Inspiringly Retold!

Mirror of the Martyrs

by John S. Oyer and Robert S. Kreider



MIRROR of the MARTYRS

Stories of courage, inspiringly retold, of 16th century Anabaptists who gave their lives for their faith.

John. S. Oyer and Robert S. Kreider

Oyer and Kreider retell some of the most moving of martyr stories.

Some four centuries ago, thousands of Christians died because they dared to refuse to join the state church in medieval Europe. Their reading of the Bible and their consciences led them to believe that church membership should be a voluntary, adult decision.

Many modern-day Christians claim these persons of courage as their spiritual ancestors. Many of those martyr scenes were etched on copper plates by Jan Luyken, a Dutch artist who worked in the late 1600s. Numerous of these copper plates still exist.

Mirror of the Martyrs reproduces 30 of these etchings and tells in readable language the courageous stories of these people of faith. Excellent for youth as well as adults.

7¾ x 10 • 96 pages • $9.95, quality paperback

What reviewers have said about this book—

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— Provident Book Finder

"This is a history which ought not be forgotten, and shows the kinship between peoples' church movements across centuries."

— Currents in Theology and Mission

"A literary, historical, and artistic event."

— Voice

"**Mirror of the Martyrs** *is a timely piece, well done; it jars our senses as we search for its deeper meaning and relevance."*

— Mennonite Quarterly Review

"The stories call us to review our own faith and to discern the times, as the sixteenth-century Anabaptists did in their time. We, too, are called to follow Christ. What price are we willing to pay?" **— Purpose**

"The powerful black and white etchings blend with historical reviews of the facts to make for a powerful account which questions the basics of religious freedom, ideas of persecution and righteousness, and issues surrounding belief.

"Chapters tell not only of martyrs, but of the artist who captured these scenes, whose plates were almost lost to history."

— The Midwest Book Review

"This is both a book of courage and of an art-treasure history." **— Bookends**

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Births

Bueter, Katelynn Mae, April 23, to Cindy (Nice) and Peter Bueter, New Bern, N.C.

Eicher, Hannah Elizabeth, April 23, to Brian and Michelle (Newman) Eicher, Hartville, Ohio.

Frederick, Lorin Randall, May 6, to Emily (Sowerbrower) and John Frederick Jr., Johnstown, Pa.

Fuller, Addison Harris, May 4, to John and Shawn (Yoder) Fuller, Newport News, Va.

Hostetler, Heath Monroe, April 16, to Eric and Kimberly (Baasch) Hostetler, Cairo, Neb.

Janzen, Christian Ryan, May 3, to Helen and John Janzen, Stoney Creek, Ont.

Loy, Emily Joan, April 30, to Carrie (Dibbern) and Scott Loy, Wood River, Neb.

Maughlin, Mateo Gonzales, April 27, to Alan and Monica (Gonzales) Maughlin, Charlottesville, Va.

Mead, Alexander Christian, April 23, to Jessica (Watson) and John Mead, Sarasota, Fla.

Meyers, Timothy Blake, May 5, to Cheryl (Hollinger) and Timothy Meyers, East Greenville, Pa.

Naumoff, Briana Lynn, April 12, to Alex Jr., and Glenda (Basinger) Naumoff, Orrville, Ohio.

Neufeldt, Joel Ryan, April 27, to Donna (Hildebrand) and Shaun Neufeldt, Steinbach, Man.

Pence, Elizabeth Nicole, April 21, to Celah (Kratz) and Robert Pence, Bridgewater, Va.

Rabenstein, Ashley Anne, April 23, Sandra (Wilson) and Steven Rabenstein, West Liberty, Ohio.

Raber, Abby Rene, May 2, to Joetta (Sommers) and Todd Raber, Sarasota, Fla.

Richuber, Dylan Anthony, April 14, to Darren and Vicki (Watkins) Richuber, Wichita, Kan.

Roth, C.J., April 19, to Jan (Aeschliman) and Troy Roth, Fayette, Ohio.

Roulet, Zachary Ryan, April 19, to Cheryl (Perry) and Keith Roulet, Pulaski, Iowa.

Saylor, Nicholas Merle, April 8, to Carolyn and Craig Saylor, Somerset, Pa.

Stogdill, Ashley Morgan, April 26, to Jason and Kelly (Gordan) Stogdill, Pulaski, Iowa.

Sydney, Joy Lewis, April 2, to Dawn (Lewis) and Roger Sydney, Long Beach, Calif.

Weldy, Joshua Robert, April 30, to John and Melanie (Bontrager) Weldy, Wakarusa, Ind.

Yoder, Ashton Nichole, April 10, 1999, received for adoption April 21, 1999, by Sheldon and Tisha (Beeson) Yoder, Hutchinson, Kan.

Marriages

Bare/Koehn: Rebecca Bare, Elkhart, Ind., and Laurence Koehn, Fort Cobb, Okla., May 1 at First Mennonite Church, Urbana, Ill.

Brubaker/Buckwalter: Gregg Brubaker, Landisville, Pa., and Sharon Buckwalter, Ephrata, Pa., May 1 at Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Eberly/Horst-Groff: Eugene Eberly, New Holland, Pa., and Thelma Horst-Groff, New Holland, April 24 at Old Road Mennonite Church, Gap, Pa.

Kauffman/Shank: Suzy Kauffman, Chambersburg, Pa., and Donald Shank, Chambersburg, April 24 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Renno/Yoder: Brian Renno, Harrisonburg, Va., and Gwendolyn Yoder, Reedsville, Pa., May 1 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Deaths

Beck, Ivah Ruth Frey, 88, Archbold, Ohio, died April 30. Spouse: Kenneth Beck (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Anna Frey (deceased). Survivors: children Mervin, Richard; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Becker, Dietrich, 101, Glendale, Ariz., died April 30. Spouse: Gladyne Becker. Parents: Jacob and Mary Jantz Becker (deceased). Other survivors: children Lea Sanner, Velma Frank; 11 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at Glencroft Chapel, Glendale.

Brubacher, Raymond, 77, St. Jacobs, Ont., died April 27. Spouse: Emma Horst Brubacher. Parents: Clayton and Lydia Kilmer Brubacher (deceased). Other survivors: children Carolyn Carr, Sandra Mohr, Don, Bruce, Mark; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 30 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Byerly, Trisia Yuvonne, 22, Des Allemands, La., died April 28 from an auto accident. Parents: Doug and Reba Byerly. Other survivors: brother and sisters Gene, Katina Cortez, Lisa Tregle. Funeral: May 5 at Des Allemands (La.) Mennonite Church.

Kropf, Velda Curtis, 86, Halsey, Ore., died April 4. Survivors: children Arzalea Hostetler, Joyce Gingerich, Delwin, Larry, Veldon; 13 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: April 8 at Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Landis, Heber, 77, Telford, Pa., died May 1. Spouse: Betty Musselman Landis. Parents: Dayton and Mattie Landes Landis (deceased). Other survivors: children Deborah Godshall, Michael; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Souderton, Pa.

Miller, Leroy, 93, Johnstown, Pa., died March 23 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Elizabeth Spory Miller (deceased). Parents: Mahlon and Lydia Mishler Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Melda; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 25 at Davidsville, Pa.

Rich, Wanda Lugbill, 80, Archbold, Ohio, died April 27 of a stroke. Spouse: Clarence Rich (deceased). Parents: Sylvanus and Mary Lugbill (deceased). Survivors: children Phillip, Mary Liechty, Karen Ruth; eight grandchildren; one grandchild. Funeral: April 30 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Saner, Chris, 97, Freeman, S.D., died April 16. Spouse: Elsie Graber Saner. Parents: John and Lena Flickinger Saner (deceased). Other survivors: children Delmar, Jerroll; nine grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Troyer, Charity Irene Gingerich, 92, Hesston, Kan., died April 18. Spouse: Menno Troyer (deceased). Parents: Amos and Nannie Yoder Gingerich (deceased). Survivors: children Leabell Miller, Marilyn Hartman, Curtis, Paul; 16 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 21 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Unruh, Elma, 95, Marion, S.D., died April 1. Spouse: August Unruh (deceased). Parents: John and Sarah Schrag Kaufman (deceased). Survivors: children Jaraine Hansen, Ronald, Darred, Rodney, Gary; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Yoder, Katie, 90, Orrville, Ohio, died May 2. Spouse: Daniel Yoder (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Amanda Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Darrel, Marty Troyer, Esther Short; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Mabel Smucker, 90, Barhamsville, Va., died April 29. Spouse: Amos Yoder (deceased). Parents: Daniel Smucker and Verna Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret Fries, Harold, Marion Delagrange, Dorothy Miller; 11 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

classifieds

- **Belleville Mennonite School** needs a ***high school English teacher*** beginning August 1999. Please contact Ray Baker, superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church** has an opening for paid half-time ***minister of visitation and senior care***. Job description available from Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526 or email irvin@npcc.net. Resumes accepted through June 22.

- **Lake Center Christian School**, a K-8 Mennonite school enrolling 370 students in the Akron/Canton area, is currently accepting applications for the following positions starting with the 1999-2000 school year: ***librarian, J.H. English, J.H. math and elementary classroom***.

  Please contact Matthew R. McMullen at 330-877-2049 for an application, or send resume to 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***kindergarten teacher*** (full day program) beginning in the 1999-2000 school year. Penn View is affiliated with the Mennonite churches in southeastern Pennsylvania and serves 560 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

  Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196.

- **Wanted:** Visionary ***CEO*** who is an innovative "student" of change for Schowalter Villa, a retirement community in Hesston, Kan. Important characteristics include collaboration and team-building skills, clear communication and fiscal responsibility. Prefer experience in health care or older adult housing and services. Strong Christian faith and character also important.

  Contact Tim Stair at Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes**, a growing continuing care retirement community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs. Master's in divinity, CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resume with salary requirements to 215-723-9876, attn. Lisa Peirce; or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Mennonite Health Assembly** seeks ***workshop proposals*** for the 48th annual assembly, March 23-26, 2000, in Williamsburg, Va. Theme areas include ethics, leadership, congregational health ministry, mental health, spirituality and health, and pastoral care. Participants are professionals and trustees involved in health and social ministry. Deadline for proposals is June 16, 1999.

For more information, contact Mim Shirk, 219-534-9689; fax 219-534-3254; email mimshirk@compuserve.com

- **Oaklawn Outpatient Services** in Elkhart, Ind., has openings for experienced ***clinical social workers*** who enjoy working with children and families. Provide social assessments and therapy services to families and children; work with schools, social service agencies, courts and families to identify and meet needs of children and youth; competitive salary and fringe benefits. If you have an MSW, clinical experience working with families, and Indiana licensure, please contact us.

Contact Oaklawn, 330 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527; 800-282-0809. EEO/AA

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking a ***fraternal adviser*** in the Kidron, Ohio, area to serve as a regional resource person and communication link with congregations, assisting them in using MMA's fraternal programs and accessing other MMA services. Qualified candidates will have strong leadership skills, ability to motivate others, good communication and public speaking skills, an understanding of local church structures and a willingness to travel. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

Send or fax letter of interest along with resume to Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***computer instructor*** to teach a variety of courses in the fields of Web authoring and design, Microsoft business applications, networking and programming. Qualifications: teaching experience, innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church, graduate degree preferred. Hesston College will support the candidate in the pursuit of professional certifications (CNE/CNI, MCSE/MCT). Full-time position available August 11.

Contact academic dean Marc Yoder, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city Christian elementary school, is seeking applications for full-time ***director of development***. Minimum requirement a bachelor's degree in business, marketing, communications, education or similar field. Marketing or development experience desirable. Seeking self-motivated individual with strong communication and organizational skills, sensitivity, respect and ability to relate to a diverse constituency, and a belief in the mission of CMLC. Applications will be accepted until July 16. Targeted starting date Sept. 13.

Send letter of application and resume to Marvin Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For more information, call 773-735-9304.

- **Olive Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***pastor*** with ministry to youth and young adults as the primary focus. Send resume or inquiry to Gary Miller, 28697 CR 30W, Elkhart, IN 46517; 219-862-2679 or email Olivemenn@juno.com.

- **Mennonite Indemnity, Inc.,** a church-based company promoting mutual aid through property and casualty insurance, seeks to fill two new leadership positions.

Director of information systems: Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in information systems and five years in systems analysis, design and management. Leadership, planning, relational and communication skills needed.

Director of insurance: Bachelor's degree in a business-related field. Three to five years of experience in the P&C industry; familiar with insurance filings and products. Strong leadership, analytical, relational and communication skills needed. CPCU or other insurance designation preferred.

Please mail, fax or email resumes with cover letter and salary expectations to Mennonite Indemnity Inc., 704 Main St., Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; fax 717-859-3983; email lkuhns@miiaba.com

- **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** in north central Indiana. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus; serve up to 40 congregations and their pastors; and be a member of the staff ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2000, and will have at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references by June 11, 1999, to IN-MI Conference Search Committee, c/o Mary Swartley, 57697 Seventh St., Elkhart, IN 46517. For more information, call Mary Swartley at 219-522-0314; email mswartley@aol.com

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following:

Women's softball coach to lead intercollegiate varsity sport. If interested, please send letter of application, resume and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim academic dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105. AAEOE

Catalog librarian, full-time, 10 months. Knowledge of and experience with MARC format, DDC, LCSH, AACR2, OCLC, required. ALA accredited MLS, preferred. Send letter of application, vita, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim academic dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEOE

Disability support services coordinator. Provide disability support services to students with documented learning disabilities. Master's degree in related field and knowledge of the ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If interested, please send a letter of application, resume and three references to Marie Morris, interim associate dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105. AAEOE

- **Bethel College**, North Newton, Kan., a top-tier Midwestern Christian liberal arts college, is currently accepting applications for the position of ***director of admissions***. The director of admissions is responsible for the planning and supervision of the college recruitment and admissions staff and serves as a member of the enrollment services team. Qualified candidates shall possess at least a bachelor's degree, minimum of two years experience in admissions in a small liberal arts college and knowledge of database systems. The position requires schedule flexibility and some limited travel. The director of admissions is responsible directly to the dean of enrollment services, and works closely with the director of financial aid. Candidate must be familiar with national and regional enrollment management issues. As an advocate for the mission of Bethel College, the candidate must have a demonstrated record of integrity, experience in staff management, and possess strong interpersonal, communication and leadership skills. A review of applicants will commence on June 11, 1999, and will continue until the position is filled.

Send letter of inquiry, resume and three references to Shirley King, chair of the director of admissions search committee, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th St., North Newton, KS 67117. Bethel College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

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A call to join the ecumenical movement

by Chad Mullet Bauman

Christ's call to be one (John 17:21) is one of his clearest commands to the church. Why have we been so reticent to enter the ecumenical movement wholeheartedly?

Several years ago I heard a Mennonite pastor call the World Council of Churches the antichrist. Certainly the WCC has its problems, but calling it the apocalyptic antithesis to all things Christian is perhaps overstating the matter. Why do Mennonites have this fear of the ecumenical movement or, more precisely, its largest and most representative body?

Perhaps we fear that if we enter the ecumenical movement we may lose our distinctiveness. That is a valid fear. There is something special about Mennonites, and we should value our unique perspective. But it does not follow that we should remove ourselves from the broader Christian community to maintain our "purity." Isolation is not the path to purity.

What does membership in the WCC entail? Members must believe in the lordship of Christ and a Trinitarian God according to the Scriptures, must acknowledge that membership in the church of Christ is larger than membership in their own church body, must recognize elements of the true church in other denominations and must be willing to learn from each other. And unity should be manifest in a common faith, prayer, service and life, and a sharing of the Eucharist.

Churches in the ecumenical movement must be dedicated to each other and not to the structure of ecumenical institutions. The WCC is not a superchurch. It is prevented by its constitution from legislating for its members or enforcing decisions on them. The WCC is simply a forum in which different confessional traditions can come together to discuss and cooperate in the pursuit of more visible unity.

What would it mean for us to join the WCC? Would we need to change at all before becoming members? No, but we must not rule out the possibility of changing after joining. It must be stressed, as the term implies, that the ecumenical movement is a *movement.*

There is always a tension between particularity and universality in the ecumenical movement. The particularities of the gospel manifest in different cultures and denominations are important. The ecumenical movement will have failed if it annihilates these particularities. But diversity is only a means to the end of greater unity. It is by being in conversation with the diverse expressions of the gospel that we come to a fuller understanding of who God is. This is why churches are called to be both local (attentive to the cultural and religious peculiarities of their space) and catholic (attentive to the broader fellowship of the church universal). Involvement in the ecumenical movement helps us escape the provincial ways of thinking to which all, especially Mennonites, are prone.

We also have much to give the ecumenical movement. Last December, at the eighth assembly of the WCC in Harare, Zimbabwe, a German Mennonite, Fernando Enns, and other members of the historic peace churches spearheaded a proposal to institute a decade-long emphasis on peace. The proposal passed by an overwhelming majority. The Anabaptist viewpoint is especially relevant at this historical juncture. Many other denominations are realizing the disadvantages of church-state marriage and are looking to Anabaptists for an alternative. To them we can offer our history as a church based not on creeds or a particular form of hierarchy but on Scripture alone. Christians are rediscovering that Christ must be the only criteria by which to judge actions. Such an assertion is at the base of Anabaptists' long-held emphasis on radical discipleship.

By being in conversation with the diverse expressions of the gospel we come to a fuller understanding of who God is.

Now is the time for us to commit fully to the ecumenical movement. Christian disunity weakens our witness to the non-Christian world and prevents the mutual edification that fellowship enables. Because of this we must seek a visible Christian unity. "Koinonia," the Greek word often translated in the New Testament as "fellowship" or "unity," also implies "participation." Christ has given us unity. It is not to be made but celebrated. But this is not an excuse for inaction. We must participate in the ecumenical movement, actively looking for ways to exhibit our given Christian unity.

Chad Mullet Bauman is a student at Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary. He attended the World Council of Churches assembly in Zimbabwe last December.

Faith resources

A Cry from the Clay by Esther Bender (Herald Press, 1999, $9.99 U.S., $14.79 Cdn.) is a collection of poetic meditations, Scripture and photos of pottery by Lynn Lais.

Calloused Hands, Courageous Souls by Jack Suderman (MARC, 1999, $13.95) articulates the nature of Christian spirituality in mission and development.

Mennonite Health Journal is a 32-page quarterly published by Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Nurses Association and edited by Jennifer H. Schrock. To subscribe, send $15 to 193 E. Frambes, Columbus, OH 43201.

Armageddon and the Peaceable Kingdom by Walter Klaassen (Herald Press, 1999, $15.99 U.S., $23.79 Cdn.) helps Christians enjoy God's kingdom now and hope for its fulfillment.

A Life of Prayer: Faith and Passion for God Alone, edited by James M. Houston (Bethany House, 1999, $9.99), is part of the Classics of Faith and Devotion Series. It is adapted from the book by Teresa of Avila (1515-1582).

A new Internet web site features an expanded Canadian Mennonite encyclopedia and an introduction to Mennonites in Canada. The Mennonite Historical Society of Canada's web site is located at *www.mhsc.ca/*

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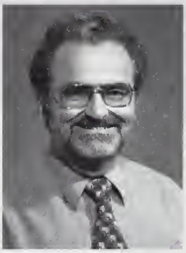

J. Lorne Peachey

What to do with the enemy we need

Something about the human psyche seems to need an enemy. If we don't have one, we'll create one.

Take the history of our country. As a boy growing up during World War II, I knew America's enemies were the Germans and soon learned not to speak Pennsylvania Dutch. Then, in the 1950s, with Germany defeated, we turned against the communists, an enemy that sustained us for most of four decades until the Berlin Wall collapsed in 1989.

With the communists no longer around to hate, we found Saddam Hussein—who has been our enemy at least twice. Today it's Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, whom the April 19 cover of *Newsweek* described as "the face of evil." While both men have certainly done their share of evil, they also seem to fill the U.S. need for an enemy at this point.

Sadly, enemies also seem to be needed in the church. One of my earliest memories of "churchly" discussions was about how modernists were going to ruin Christianity. Later communists were supposed to be infiltrating organized religion at the same time that draft dodgers were thought to be "ruining" the peace witness of the Mennonite church. Today, the list of enemies can be as long as ever: liberals, conservatives, relativists, literalists, homosexuals, homophobes …

When you love someone, pray for that person and minister to their needs, bad blood won't last long between you.

Why this need for an enemy? I got a clue from Naomi Lederach, who, with with her husband, John, just completed a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Northern Ireland. She told a gathering at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa., last month she has concluded that the enmity in Northern Ireland continues because people find conflict energizing. "People use an enemy to help define who they are," she said. "When they don't have that, they feel lost."

She seems to be right. How many of us, asked to describe ourselves, begin by saying what it is we are not or talking about those from whom we are different? I caught myself doing it again when asked by a seatmate on a plane what a Mennonite is. "Well," I began, "unlike some Protestant groups, Mennonites don't go to war. …" Then I stopped and switched to talking about what we stand for: the lordship of Jesus Christ, the ethic of love made possible through the grace of God, the power of the Holy Spirit to be servants of the kingdom.

It wasn't easy to articulate—or for my seatmate to understand. Several times I was tempted to switch to the ditty I had learned as an adolescent: "Mennonites don't smoke, drink or chew / nor run around with those who do."

Having an enemy does more than just help us define who we are. It also gives us someone to blame. French biologist Jean Rostand has written: "What makes our opponents useful is that they allow us to believe that without them we would be able to realize our ideals."

How often we lament our inability to be the church as we think it should be because of some outside influence. And how we're tempted to blame others for our poor showing as God's children rather than our own selfishness and lackadaisical attitude.

Jesus, apparently, was aware of the human need for enemies. Rather than lecturing against it, however, he told us what to do with those we classify this way: "Love them, pray for them," he said in Matthew 5:44-45. "In this way you show you are true children of God." The apostle Paul took Jesus' ethic one step further and told us to feed our enemies when they are hungry and give them a drink when they are thirsty (Romans 12:20).

Both Jesus and Paul were doing more than giving us an ethic by which to live as Christians. They knew that when you love someone, pray for that person and minister to their needs, bad blood won't last long between you.

In this day of opposing views and beliefs about how to be faithful, it's easy for us to classify those who are different as enemies. Doing so may fill a need within us, but it does little to advance the kingdom of God.

We would also do well to remember that the enemies we have today will soon be replaced by new ones tomorrow. Marcus Aurelius wrote in the seventh century: "Think of the myriad enmities, suspicions, animosities and conflicts that are now vanished with the dust … and fret no more."—*jlp*

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a grandma's healing prayers

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Point of disagreement

I am grieved that you chose to put a picture of a person pointing a gun at your brethren on the cover of the May 18 issue. No matter what your intention was, this was yet another sensational image of violence in a world that is already saturated with violence. How can you justify the use of this kind of violence to achieve the reduction of violence in the world?

Are we as Christians not called to live differently from the rest of the world? Please read John 17:15-16, Romans 12:2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:22. It is a grave mistake to imitate the world by using explicitly violent imagery to gain attention. Your decision to do so showed a lack of judgment.

I am concerned and dismayed about the increasingly wide path I see *The Mennonite,* General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church taking. I pray that, for your part, you will ardently seek the Lord's will for your future endeavors so that you do not unwittingly become a pawn of the enemy of God, sowing tares where the Lord has planted his fields.—*Karen Widman, St. Paul, Minn.*

Did you have to do it? Put such a horrible picture on the front of the May 18 issue? It almost caused me to put it away and not even pick it up. I did look but couldn't find any explanation for the cover photo. It embarrasses me. What is the message you're trying to portray? Some kind of explanation would be helpful.—*D. Paul Miller, Normal, Ill.*

Lessons for positive change

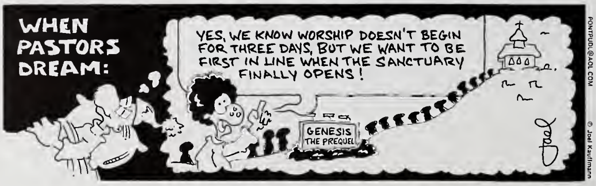
Regarding the April 27 issue on schooling as well as the May 18 issue on the Columbine High School tragedy, what if:

- all the wonderful teachers in our Mennonite primary and secondary schools were teaching in the public schools?
- all the wonderful Mennonite students in Mennonite schools were in the public schools?
- all the wonderful Mennonite parents who pay $4,000 to $7,000 to put our children in Mennonite schools put those same dollars in the public schools?
- all the wonderful Mennonite parents who put their time and energy into strengthening the Mennonite schools put that same time and energy into strengthening our public schools?
- all the wonderful Mennonites got involved in public institutions such as school boards, city councils and planning commissions?

Wouldn't we have stronger and healthier communities as well as stronger and healthier children? Public involvement in ones and twos is difficult; with a larger group, positive change becomes more possible.—*Richard A. Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


WHEN PASTORS DREAM:
YES, WE KNOW WORSHIP DOESN'T BEGIN FOR THREE DAYS, BUT WE WANT TO BE FIRST IN LINE WHEN THE SANCTUARY FINALLY OPENS!
GENESIS THE PREQUEL
Joel
PONTPUDL@AOL.COM
© Joel Kauffmann

Pain and surrender

Thank you for the article by Jan Johnson in the May 11 issue ("The Power of Surrender"). I was uplifted and encouraged to immerse myself more in the presence of God. When someone shares the process of pain, brokenness and surrender that is part of receiving God and listening to his Spirit, I am taken to my own places of pain and need for surrender. I am convinced that more of this is what we need in order to face the tough issues of the day, rather than more intellectual debate and discussion. Again, thank you and I hope to see more of this kind of article in the future. —*Ginnie Burkholder, Canton, Ohio*

A strong voice of protest

We have followed the church integration/transformation process with great interest. We are supportive of and sympathetic toward the concept of unity of the body of Christ. We are sure that God calls us to a unity based upon the grace, peace, truth, righteousness and holiness of a loving God. We are concerned that the unity some are calling for is based on a fuzzy love and peace ethic that would welcome all behavior and practice as acceptable for a disciple of Jesus Christ. We believe that true unity is based upon the complete, thorough, normative and authoritative word of God revealed in the Bible. Only this kind of unity is authentic.

We have become distressed by a number of issues. Among them are the following:

1. There seems to be a smorgasbord approach to the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective that appears to encourage incompatible perspectives of biblical interpretation.
2. The Membership Committee seems unwilling or unable to take a clear and consis-

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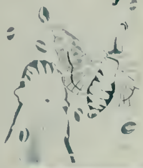

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readers say

tent position on the practice of accepting active homosexuals into congregational membership.

3. The strategy of integration/transformation leadership appears to be one of establishing the new church in practice before all the details have been spelled out and all the conflicts have been resolved.

4. The decision to have two national church bodies rather than a unified church appears to be an abandonment of the goal of having one North American church.

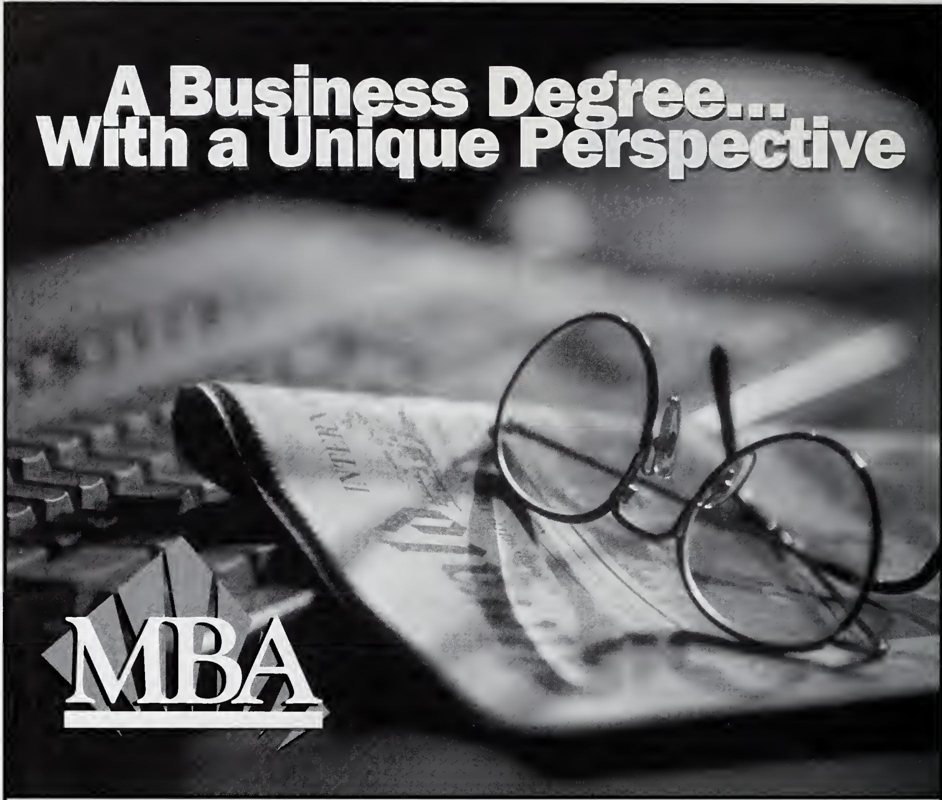
5. The language of transformation has been used to deal with structural issues but not with lifestyle issues.

6. There is an unfair practice of subtly labeling those opposed to the merger as being against the unity of the body of Christ.

As the result of these concerns, we feel compelled to record a strong voice of protest. We are extremely reluctant to consent to join the new church as currently outlined. We would call upon the leadership of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Conference of Mennonites in Canada and the integration/transformation committees to clarify and resolve the unfinished membership concerns before action is taken in St. Louis. We believe that God would call us to a ministry of transformation. Such a ministry would call people out of sinful behavior and practice. This ministry would welcome persons to assist them in moving toward holiness. Further, we would plead with one and all to affirm without reservation the complete, thorough, authoritative and normative word of God expressed in the Bible. We commend these thoughts to you for reflection, prayer and action.—*Membership and leadership of Indian Valley Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.*

Editor's note: This letter was signed by 65 people.

Cover photo
by Dale D. Gehman



Eastern Mennonite University has launched a new kind of Master of Business Administration program. One that is geared to mid-career people in small and medium-size businesses and non-profit organizations. The program builds on the strengths of EMU's highly respected Department of Business & Economics.

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Out of her cocoon

by Suzanne Miller Lawrence

My mother touches me. I wake to another spoonful of Dr. McClammond's medicine. She tips the square brown bottle. Pieces of grass swirl up from the bottom. The spoonful tastes smoky. I don't mind.

Cocooned in a big bed—my parents' bed, pulled out into the front room—I absorb the heat of the wood stove at my feet and the comfort of the hot onion poultice on my chest. I sleep and weave dreams easily.

I dream a cardinal swooping down the dirt road between two rows of bare-branched Osage orange trees—a flash of red among black branches; fernlike weeds and thin grasses greening the ditch; air full of dizzy spring rain; hedge trees about to break bud and shimmer with tiny leaves in comradeship with mulberry, cottonwood and elm.

I know I am the bird—me wearing my new red sweater, walking two miles to school in that rain last week. I imagine the sweater beautiful against my red hair. I know I am not a bird. I am an almost-grown-up girl who can't give up wearing a damp sweater even upon my teacher's counsel. Now my pride takes my breath away.

My mother's voice from the kitchen scatters dreams. Older folks think they have to use the whole power of their lungs to talk through telephone wire. She politely shouts an inquiry into Grandma's health. This must be Grandpa. Then—even Grandma probably hears her—"She lies so still."

I remember stories my mother told me about Grandma being sick. She said Grandma once miscarried a baby because she stayed so many nights in the silkworm shed keeping a fire going. Silkworm eggs must be kept warm to hatch in early spring. Grandma learned this as a girl in Russia.

Silkworms take as much care as babies do, Mom told me. They must be fed every few hours. Grandpa used to cut armloads of mulberry branches and carry them to the little shed. He and Grandma would take the bare, used branches from the silkworm trays and replace them with fresh leafy ones so the tiny worms could keep eating and growing.

I know the importance of the money Grandma earned raising silkworms, but remembering her bitter tears at Easter confuses me. I didn't mean to let the silkworms escape. I must close my eyes now. I feel tired.

From the darkness a rooster runs toward me. He is huge with brilliant plumes—orange and green, blue and gold. His fat red wattles and tall comb flap with a smacking sound against his neck and skull.

From the darkness a rooster runs toward me. He is huge with brilliant plumes—orange and green, blue and gold.

Long, black-haired silkworms scatter like rippling waves in the short grass around my feet. I turn to the open door of the silkworm shed and see empty trays inside. My cousins and uncles shout at me from across the yard. I look up to see Grandma's face in the parlor window.

I wake shivering. Always when Grandma is angry I want to disappear. In these last few days I have sometimes felt like a ghost floating in and out of visibility. The big bed in the mid-

Lora Jost

Mennonites were successful (several families became wealthy) in the German silk industry during the late 1600s. Mennonites carried their expertise with them in migrations to Prussia, Russia and the United States. Mennonite involvement in sericulture (raising silkworms) on the Great Plains lasted from the 1870s to the 1920s. Cocoons used for silk must be exposed to high heat to kill the pupae within. Since the emerging moth ruins the cocoon, only a few are allowed to develop for breeding purposes.

dle of the small room makes me hard to miss, though. Mom hears me now. She adds two embroidered comforters to my bedding and brings a fresh, hot, pungent poultice for my chest.

"Maria," she whispers excitedly, "Grandpa is bringing Grandma to see you."

Mom looks flustered. The middle of the day in the middle of the week—this is an unusual time for visiting. We know that ever since Grandma gave in to a wheelchair she has received visitors but not made visits. We are well aware, too, that since Easter Grandma has not spoken to our family. Now Grandpa says she insists on coming.

The poultice warms me and I close my eyes. I hear Mom's muffled, excited conversation with my youngest brother in the kitchen, but their voices fade into a vision of Grandpa's rooster excitedly gobbling up silkworms. The rooster eats and eats. His crop distends enormously. His strut degenerates into a stagger.

What are those loud noises? Is it Grandpa hammering a board across the silkworm shed door so that no one can ever open it again? Is it the report of the shotgun he had borrowed from the neighbor boys to shoot the rooster he had slowly chased off the yard into the dappled shade of the mulberry lane?

Is it the slam of our own kitchen screen door? I open my eyes and see the whole family around me. I see Grandpa.

He says, "It's what she wants. Everybody must go out."

As they go into the kitchen, my brothers and sister giggle about the way Grandpa had strapped Grandma's wheelchair to a plank on the side of his Studebaker. The door slams again. They are gone. It is quiet.

I start to close my eyes. Then I hear something like a moan beside me. I shift my body under the weight of my blankets and see Grandma. Bending forward in her wheelchair, she is shutting her almond-shaped eyes tightly. Her broad, fine jaw begins to quiver.

She utters words. She may be praying. I can't know. She chooses a language I don't understand. Is it Russian? She raises loud sounds with feeling. I become fully awake. Suddenly she sighs and is quiet. When she opens her eyes she looks straight into mine.

"Maria, I thought I was going to lose you."

I don't know what to say.

A moth emerges from between my comforters and flutters between us. "Look," she laughs. I laugh, too.

I hear the kitchen door open. I hear the birds. Our family is coming back. I feel a loosening within my chest. I keep my eyes on Grandma. I will not disappear.

Suzanne Lawrence lives in Goessel, Kan.

This story is based on memoirs of Rachel Ratzlaff, whom Suzanne interviewed. Names have been changed and details added.

we

Friends of mine who have no strong church connection wondered if I'd be willing to officiate at their upcoming wedding. The man had been married before, when he was in his early 20s, and shortly afterward divorced. That was 15 years earlier. Now he was involved in a long-standing and apparently healthy relationship, and he and his fiancée wanted me to officiate at their wedding.

I was flattered, and many of my emotions told me to do it. Maybe my involvement would communicate Christ's acceptance of them. Maybe through premarital counseling I could make a positive impact on the dynamics of their relationship. Besides, I like to officiate at weddings. And these were my friends.

But Jesus' strong words on divorce and remarriage kept ringing in my ears: "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made [humanity] male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. … Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery" (Mark 10:6-9, 11-12). Although in Matthew's version Jesus permits divorce in cases of infidelity, remarriage by the divorced people seems to be rejected as adultery there as well.

In a culture that allowed remarriage about as freely as ours does, Jesus prohibited it. Although some argue that Jesus' attitude was based on the way divorce and remarriage oppressed first-century women, Mark's version—in which Jesus' words refer equally to women and men—casts doubt on that attempted rationalization.

As a Christian, I'm bound to follow the teachings and example of Jesus no matter what. How could I with integrity bless something in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit when the Son taught that the thing I was blessing in his name is a sin? Which do I trust more, my gut or my Lord? Although I don't claim to understand all that's behind Jesus' position on this

Why I want to stop officiating at ings

by John Zimmerman

issue, I do trust that Jesus' teachings come out of love for all God's creatures and an understanding deeper than my own. After much reflection, prayer and discussion, I told my friends no.

I felt terrible about it—physically sick. I feared that my friends would take my refusal as a rejection of them. Sure enough, even after I explained where I was coming from, my decision seemed to put some emotional distance between us.

I hate things Christians do that can easily be misinterpreted to mean, "You're sinners, and we're not." What could be more spiritually damaging to all involved than this kind of pharisaic distortion of the gospel? The center of Jesus' good news was God reaching out in grace specifically to sinners—and that meant each of us. If being welcome in the church or being listed on the membership rolls were limited to those whose lifestyles were free of sin, we'd all be on the outside.

The same Jesus who prohibited divorce and remarriage also taught, "Do not judge ... for in the same way you judge others, you will be judged" (Matthew 7:1-2). And he defined sexual sin in ways that convict all of us—or at least in ways that convict me (Matthew 5:27-28). Am I so perfect? Certainly not. Are my own sexuality and marriage free of sin? Far from it.

The central themes of the Christian message are absolute grace and absolute discipleship. Out of unfathomable mercy and at great personal cost, God has reached out to people through the crucified Jesus to reconcile us to God and each other. In response to the shocking grace of God, we're called to follow in all of life the one who has saved us.

Officiating at weddings of people who have never been divorced while refusing to do so for divorced people risks veiling the church's central message of grace—the unconditional love with which God reaches out to us in the crucified Jesus. However, agreeing to officiate at weddings of divorced people looks like defiance of the Lord who has saved us—a failure to surrender to Christ's call for discipleship.

My preferred solution to this unpleasant dilemma is for me as a pastor to stop officiating at weddings. Though well grounded in secular law and church practice, the expectation that pastors are to officiate when people promise themselves to each other in marriage has no biblical support. In none of the biblical references to weddings do pastors or priests officiate.

All practices of the church—especially post-New Testament innovations like pastors officiating at weddings—must stand or fall on the extent to which they express the message of Jesus Christ. Pastors officiating at weddings present the church with a false choice that distorts the gospel.

I prefer sticking to baptisms and the Lord's Supper. As for the myriad other life decisions people make (including those regarding marriage), I'll limit myself to the persuasive power of the word—teaching and offering direct counsel when doing so seems most likely to manifest rather than obscure the good news of Jesus Christ.

John Zimmerman is pastor at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Religious News Service

All practices of the church—especially post-New Testament innovations like pastors officiating at weddings—must stand or fall on the extent to which they express the message of Jesus Christ.

Budding South Korean group calls Anabaptism welcome alternative to church needing change

GCMC-MBM-MCC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Sung Kang-ho was introduced to Anabaptism as a student in Germany when he became acquainted with Mennonites in Heidelberg. Now a Presbyterian youth minister in South Korea, he wants to apply the historic Anabaptist emphasis on service by organizing Christian service teams of youth and young adults.

SEOUL, South Korea—Although their country is known around the world for its large Protestant churches, some South Korean Christians are looking for another way—and looking to Anabaptism.

"A small group of us got together several years ago to study what the biblical basis of the church should be," says Nam Sang-og, a founder and leader of Jesus Village Church in Chunchon, about 70 miles north of Seoul. "The traditional church [in Korea] has some problems, such as lack of community spirit and of motivation for laypeople to be involved.

"We discovered that the biblical church was a community, that it was quite close to [the early Anabaptists]. The body of Christ, the church, should be built by the people of God, not only the pastor and a few leaders."

Sang-og is an Anabaptist sympathizer, and his congregation runs counter to the country's institutional Protestant churches. With 26 families plus a number of single people, Jesus Village Church practices shared leadership and devotes much of its time and money to service.

The congregation is part of a budding movement but with scattered adherents. Karen and Tim Froese, workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and partially supported by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), are helping nurture and link those who find Anabaptism a welcome infusion of life to the contemporary South Korean church.

"Our purpose is not to give direction to the movement," Tim Froese says, "but to walk alongside those who are sympathetic, not to plant a church but to encourage the development of the Anabaptist movement in Korea."

Sung Kang-ho discovered Anabaptism as a student in Germany when he became acquainted with a community of Mennonites in Heidelberg. He wants to bring the historic emphasis on service and peacemaking to the youth and young adults he works with as a Presbyterian minister. His idea is for service groups to work in other countries for a year.

"This is a group that's thinking a lot about the purpose of life, what's important, what they want to do with their lives," Kang-ho says. "The church isn't doing well at helping them answer these questions."

Lee Yoon-sik agrees that the church has to change. "There's too much difference between the rich and the poor, the clergy and the laypeople," he says.

An ordained Presbyterian minister and leader of Jesus Village Church, Yoon-sik was first introduced to Anabaptism during his seminary studies. But he says he learned more from the senior pastor under whom he first worked. That man had once been a chaplain at Mennonite Vocational School, which MCC ran in Kyung San, South Korea, from 1953 to 1971.

"I learned that discipleship doesn't come from study, it comes from action, from doing," Yoon-sik says. "I knew that this was what I'd been looking for."

His interest in Anabaptism even took him and his family for a year to Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

The Anabaptist sympathizers' search for alternatives has led to explorations of more tangible structures, such as an Anabaptist center or research institute. "We hope to have a physical place, perhaps based in Seoul," Tim Froese says, "with extension campuses, such as Jesus Village Church, places to hold lectures and seminars and to house libraries of translations of Anabaptist materials."

But none of that currently exists. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective has been translated into Korean, but Froese is not sure it should be published—at least not until it is contextualized. Koreans need to struggle with what it means to be Anabaptist in a Korean context, he says.

"Anabaptism is not an institution; it's a spirit, a faith," Froese says. "Korean Christians can be Anabaptist without the Mennonite name."
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC, MBM and MCC news services

Koreans increasing at Winnipeg church

Hun Lee was a co-pastor of a 13,000-member megachurch in Seoul, South Korea, when he got tired of the competition and busyness.

"I couldn't find a communal spirit in my church in Korea," Lee says.

An acquaintance encouraged him to go to Canada and learn from the Anabaptists.

So Lee and his wife, Sunny, did. And in 1997, they became the first Korean members of Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Since then a church within a church has emerged as 15 Korean families and some single people worship at Charleswood on Sunday afternoons. Lee provides much of the leadership.

"My vision is to have a multicultural church, not to have a separate church for different ethnic groups," he says. "If ever we're going to get along in the world, we must worship together."

Sunday morning services occasionally include Korean Scripture readings and songs. But Charleswood pastor John Braun points out, "Most of the core Korean members come in the morning and stay for two services."
—Canadian Mennonite

Support from U.S. church, government needed to alleviate Colombia violence, peace worker says

WASHINGTON—Imagine sitting in a crowded church service in a noisy slum of Bogotá when a grenade is thrown into the room from a passing motorcycle. In the first weeks of May, six such attacks were directed at Colombian churches.

The country's churches have recognized that they must play an active role in alleviating the violence, says a Colombian Mennonite peace worker. But so must U.S. churches and the U.S. government.

"Without the active involvement of the United States, there will be no peace process in Colombia," Ricardo Esquivia said during a May 28 visit to Washington.

Esquivia is the director of Justapaz, the peace and justice arm of the Colombian Mennonite Church. His work supports efforts to provide shelter, education and agricultural opportunities to some of the nearly 1.5 million Colombians displaced by his country's 50-year armed conflict. In Washington, Esquivia met with church, human rights and government officials to raise awareness of the violence in his country.

Photo by: Ryan Beiler

Ricardo Esquivia, a Colombian Mennonite peace worker, addresses a meeting of church and human rights leaders during a May 28 visit to Washington. Esquivia is director of Justapaz, the peace and justice agency of the Colombian Mennonite Church. His visit was designed to raise awareness of the ongoing violence in Colombia, where a recent outbreak has targeted churches.

Though a fragile peace process has started between the government and the guerrillas, violence has actually increased as rebel forces compete for bargaining power through shows of force. The hostilities come primarily from three armed groups: the Colombian military, leftist guerrillas and right-wing private armies, called paramilitaries. The military—with U.S. weapons and training—focuses its strength against the guerrilla groups while granting relative impunity and perhaps outright support to the paramilitaries, which have committed 75 percent of reported human rights abuses.

The Mennonites' nonviolent stance has made them a target of all armed groups, and paramilitary attacks against Mennonite churches have injured 10 to 15 members. The state accuses the Mennonites of being unpatriotic, while the guerrillas and paramilitaries see them as obstacles to their popular support and military objectives. Even their humanitarian work is seen as support for the "wrong side."

Esquivia and his co-workers have not been immune, having received a number of death threats over the years. Esquivia and his family at one time had to take refuge in the United States.

The current crisis has brought together diverse church groups to work for peace. "We are beginning to be more conscious of our role on a social level, of the role the church has in the face of victims of violence, in the face of confusion, in the face of death, in the face of destruction," said Esquivia, who is also chair of the Peace and Human Rights Commission of the Colombian Council of Evangelical Churches.

> Mennonites are forgetting that they are a church of peace.
>
> —*Ricardo Esquivia*

But that is a role the North American church must also recognize, he said. Esquivia is helping organize a prayer circle around the site of an important July 28-29 peace meeting in Colombia. He invites Christians around the world to participate by holding similar services at the Colombian embassies in their countries.

There is even more that could be done and isn't. Esquivia said being Mennonite means more than abstaining from violence; it includes active peacemaking—especially when sisters and brothers in the faith are suffering.

"Mennonites are forgetting that they are a church of peace," Esquivia said.

In the Colombians' case, Esquivia said, they are suffering in part because of U.S. policies. He noted that the U.S. government officially supports the peace process but continues to supply military aid and training to the Colombian army, despite its record of abuse and corruption.

Esquivia urged U.S. churches to form relationships with their Colombian counterparts through prayer, letters of encouragement, material aid, even voluntary service.

Hostilities in recent years have killed 19 pastors, closed 300 churches and forced 2,500 families of church workers to flee their homes. —*Ryan Beiler*

Preparing to pray for peace

Alezander Veronis (left), priest at Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Lancaster, Pa., and his assistant, Dumitru Macaili, review the text of the Moleban, a traditional Eastern Orthodox prayer service held in times of hostilities. In light of the Balkans conflict, Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church hosted the May 21 service, which was led by six priests, both Serbian and Greek Orthodox.

Photo by Mark Will

With MCC's assistance, Ugandan cooperative takes new approach to educating students for life

MCC photo by Charmayne D. Brubaker

We want our graduates to be lifelong learners.

—Emmanuel Ndawula Katerragga

KAMPALA, Uganda—North Americans are focusing on equipping students with the skills they need to perform the jobs of a modern competitive world economy. Not so halfway around the globe, where a rural Ugandan cooperative's rallying cry is, "School to self-reliance."

"Each year our universities in Uganda graduate 10,000 students," says Emmanuel Ndawula Katerragga, one of the founders of the 130-member co-op. "They graduate knowing how to work in an office, but that is not practical here in Uganda, where unemployment is 50 percent. They leave school, find no job and end up back at home unable to grow food or build their own house.

"Look at me," Katerragga continues. "I studied construction, but when I graduated I was unable to build a home for my family. At school I learned how to build, wire and install plumbing in homes, but the methods taught and materials used are not available or are too expensive for people in rural areas."

So Katerragga and his neighbors are building a school at the top of a hill at the edge of his land, where young people from the neighborhood can learn to build their own homes, grow their own food and be self-reliant.

At the school, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Wendy Miller teaches English to about 50 students between the ages of 13 and 17. Most of the students are orphans and living with relatives, their parents having died during war or from AIDS.

"We want the students to learn English because most books here are in English," Katerragga says. "To be lifelong learners, our students need to know English. And we want our graduates to be lifelong learners."

He is not the only co-op member to start a school in the countryside surrounding the town of Masaka, a two-hour drive southwest of Kampala. Pereginno Kikambi began a vocational training school on his farm in 1992. The first year, he recalls, there were 15 students. Now 123 students are studying carpentry, welding, bricklaying, home economics and tailoring at the school.

The school has graduated 85 students; 45 will graduate this year. Most of the graduates of the two-year curriculum have jobs or their own business, Kikambi proudly reports.

John and Josephine Kizza, two other co-op members, run an agricultural extension school on their family farm. Each week 200 people—farmers from across Uganda, university students, government officials—flock to the Kizzas' 3½ acres to see their sustainable, organic farm. They raise goats, pigs, chickens, cattle and sheep. Tucked between the rows of their banana plantation, visitors find coffee trees, pumpkins, avocado trees, papaya trees, compost and mulch.—*Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker of MCC News Service*

Bluffton College alumni receive awards

BLUFFTON, Ohio—An international consultant, a peace worker and a college administrator were given Bluffton (Ohio) College outstanding alumni awards on May 29.

Nate Fields, a 1971 Bluffton graduate, is a senior consultant for an international consulting firm, ATMS international. His areas of specialization include enterprise development, water development and child survival projects. He previously served with Mennonite Central Committee, World Vision International and the International Youth Foundation. He has also held congressional and White House staff positions.

Jerusalem native Mubarak Awad, a 1973 graduate, was introduced to Mennonites as a teacher at a Mennonite orphanage in Jerusalem. From there he went to Bluffton, where he developed an interest in nonviolence. Awad started the Ohio Youth Advocate Program (now the National Youth Advocate Program) and the Palestinian Counseling Center and the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence in Jerusalem.

Sue Heimann, a 1979 graduate, has held a number of positions at Ashland (Ohio) College and is currently dean of student affairs.

Ontario couple honored for North America work

ELKHART, Ind.—John and Ruth Hess, who have ministered in southern Ontario for 47 years, have received Mennonite Board of Missions' James and Rowena Lark Award for evangelism and church development in North America.

After starting their career at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., the Hesses in 1955 moved to Warden Park Mennonite Church in Scarborough, where they served for 30 years. During that time they helped start a housing development, nursery school and community center. In 1986, the Hesses moved to Kingston to work at Kingston's Prison for Women.

The Lark Award is named for the first African-American bishop in the Mennonite Church and his wife.—*MBM News Service*

Youth magazine wins national awards

NEWTON, Kan.—The Evangelical Press Association (EPA) has given *With*, the youth magazine published by Faith & Life Press, an Award of Merit for its overall quality, including design, content and editing. *With* also received a third-place award in the fiction category and a fifth-place award in the first-person category.

The awards were presented at EPA's awards banquet last month in Orlando, Fla.

With's circulation includes teenagers in the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren and Church of the Brethren.—*GCMC News Service*

MCC food, school kits arrive in Iraq

AKRON, Pa.—Tomato seeds, 17,760 cans of turkey, 28,000 school kits, 1,000 tons of beans and 1,000 tons of flour from Mennonite Central Committee have arrived in Iraq, which is suffering through a food shortage due to more than eight years of sanctions.

The seeds, part of a joint project with the Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture, will be distributed to farmers in July, the start of the next growing season. About half the school kits were distributed in time for end-of-year tests; the rest of the kits will be distributed at the start of the next school year in September. The beans and flour, sent through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, were distributed to more than 100 hospitals and to refugee centers. In addition, some 2,000 needy families were identified to receive a three-month supply of beans.—*MCC News Service*

Former Zaire missionary dies at 79

NEWTON, Kan.—Longtime General Conference Mennonite Church mission worker Samuel E. Entz died May 11 at the age of 79. A Newton resident, he and his wife, Leona, served with Commission on Overseas Mission in Zaire (now Congo) from 1949 to 1976.
—*GCMC News Service*

by the way ...

The first Mennonite vacation Bible school curriculum, written by Noah Oyer, was published in 1928.—*Mennonite Historical Bulletin*

Pandora Press U.S. News

**Watch this fall-spring 1999-2000
for these new books and more from Pandora U.S.**

- *Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible*, ed. Ted Grimsrud and Loren Johns.
- *Anabaptists and Postmodernity*, ed. Sue and Gerald Biesecker-Mast.
- *Violence Renounced: René Girard, Biblical Studies, and Peacemaking*, ed. Willard Swartley.

Offering services are editors David Graybill, Daniel Hertzler, Valerie Weaver-Zercher; copy editor Noël King; publisher Michael A. King; marketing consultant W. Kent Hartzler; academic books consultant Loren Johns; proofreader Brenda Martin, and others.

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Events

Virginia Conference annual assembly, July 14-17, Harrisonburg, Va.

Festival of Culture food, music and crafts exhibit, July 10, Lancaster, Pa. Sponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions. Contact: Mary Jane Puryear, 717-898-2251 or MaryJane@emm.org.

Rehoboth Mennonite Church, Hopkins Park, Ill., 50th anniversary celebration, July 31-Aug. 1. Contact: Hazel Smith, 815-472-6517.

A Believers Church Conference

August 8-10, 1999
Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

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http://www.bluffton.edu/~johnsl/ApocMill.htm
Early registration rates if postmarked by July 1.

Ask about seminary credit available

Workers

Helmuth, David, began a pastorate at Faith Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., on April 4.

Kauffman, Ron was commissioned as an itinerant pastor May 2 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Rose, Carol was ordained May 23 as pastor of Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.

Schrock, Jim was commissioned for prison ministry May 2 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Wenger, Kathy Weaver was ordained April 18 as pastor at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Correction: Roy Hange and Maren Tyedmers Hange began a pastorate at Charlottesville (Va.) Mennonite Church on June 1. Maren Tyedmers Hange was omitted from the May 11 issue.

Births

Alderfer, Matthew Donald, May 3, to Denise (Detweiler) and Steve Alderfer, Sellersville, Pa.

Barrett, Joe Dalton, May 13, to Jill (Kingdon) and Wayne Barrett, Newport News, Va.

Bender, Noel James, May 11, to Bob and Donna (Tracey) Bender, Waterloo, Ont.

Brandt, Karina Nicole, May 3, to David and Jill (Friesen) Brandt, Newton, Kan.

Buchtel-Devine, Violet Jean, May 5, to Laura Devine and Steve Buchtel, Markham, Ill.

Cobb, Sydney Grace, May 10, to Adam and Jennifer (Schrock) Cobb, Archbold, Ohio.

Detweiler, Landon Paul, May 9, to Don and Tara (Paul) Detweiler, Telford, Pa.

Esau, Zachary Robert, April 21, to Chris and Sheri (Guhr) Esau, Moundridge, Kan.

Flavin, Paige Louise, May 1, to Amy (Slater) and Pete Flavin, Louisville, Ohio.

Gerber, Nicholas James, Nov. 16, 1998, received for adoption April 13, 1999, by Dawn (Hochstetler) and Doug Gerber, Nappanee, Ind.

Gingrich, Mariah Stoltzfus, May 11, to Lonna Stoltzfus and Myron Gingrich, Madison, Wis.

Gongwer, Stepheni Marlene, May 9, to Judi (Beck) and Steve Gongwer, Elkhart, Ind.

Hildebrand, Nolan Peter, May 19, to Elaine (Sawatzky) and Gaylan Hildebrand, Altona, Man.

Hummel, Dylan James, May 19, to Dallas and Jennifer (Bishop) Hummel, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hunsberger, Samuel Isaiah, May 11, to Douglas and Janelle (Bontrager) Hunsberger, Souderton, Pa.

Jordan, Bethany Grace, May 6, to MaLisa (Burns) and Michael Jordan, Mount Joy, Pa.

Kaufman, Jalen James, April 4, to James and Kerry (Sorensen) Kaufman, Freeman, S.D.

Krall, Kyra Elizabeth Friesen, April 26, to Rachel Friesen and Steven Krall, Fort Myers, Fla.

Kreider, Benjamin Ryan, May 16, to Brent and Kristin (Wile) Kreider, Lititz, Pa.

Maier, Kali Anne, May 12, to Kimi (Litwiller) and Mike Maier, Bloomington, Ill.

Mark, Nathaniel George, May 22, to David Mark and Julie Phillips Mark, Granger, Ind.

Mast, Derek Cole, May 17, to Brian and Selena Mast, Goshen, Ind.

Nafziger, Elliott Franklin, May 11, to Gail (Hess) and Shawn Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.

Nash, Willow Rae, May 8, to Corbin and Janelle (Miller) Nash, Berea, Ohio.

Norton, David Matthew, May 11, to Sharon and Steve Norton, Goshen, Ind.

Pletcher, Jocelyn Nicole, May 24, to Shelley (Caldwell) and Stan Pletcher, Berrien Springs, Mich.

Quiring, Adriana Sophia, May 12, to Ken and Yolanda (Kroeker) Quiring, Elkhart, Ind.

Roth, Emily Sue, April 22, to Karla (Smucker) and Wynn Roth, Richmond, Ind.

Schwartzentruber, Colton Edward, April 28, to Marlin and Sherry (Bender) Schwartzentruber, Waterloo, Ont.

Shilling, Kara Louise, April 22, to Barb (Miller) and John Shilling, Creston, Ohio.

Shindyapin, Mark Valerevich, March 29, to Natalia and Valery Shindyapin, Belleville, Pa.

Steinman, Curtis Mitchell, April 24, to Alyce (Schumm) and Todd Steinman, Tavistock, Ont.

Stutzman, William Kelly, May 8, to Kelly and Stephanie (Mikal) Stutzman, Sarasota, Fla.

Utshudi, Daniel Luyambe, May 3, to Armand and Jackie Utshudi, Woodbridge, Va.

Marriages

Benner/Myers: Jason Benner, Pennsburg, Pa., and Janelle Myers, Mount Joy, Pa., May 15 at Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Delp/Wallin: Alison Delp, Blooming Glen, Pa., and Arne Lars Erik Wallin, Bensalem, Pa., May 8 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Frederick/Michener: John Frederick, Telford, Pa., and Sherry Michener, Hatfield, Pa., May 15 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Gerig/Johnson: Nita Gerig, South Bend, Ind., and Aaron Timothy Johnson, South Bend, May 22 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Gingerich/Yoakam: Dennis Gingerich, Dundee, Ohio, and Atlanta Yoakam, New Philadelphia, Ohio, May 15 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Harms/Heinrichs: Ashley Harms, Winnipeg, and Teri-Lynn Heinrichs, Altona, Man., April 3 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Harper/Miller: Robin Harper, West Palm Beach, Fla., and Brian Miller, Sarasota, Fla., May 8 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Hostetler/Workinger: Kenton Hostetler, Middlebury, Ind., and Emily Workinger, Middlebury, May 8 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Koederitz/Morris: Kerri Koederitz, Rolla, Mo., and Ty Morris, Jefferson City, Mo., May 8 at First United Methodist Church, Rolla, Mo.

Shelley/Tracey: James Shelley, California, and Michelle Tracey, South Bend, Ind., March 28 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Deaths

Baer, Lois Grove, 86, Frostburg, Md., died May 8 of a stroke. Spouse: Adam Baer (deceased). Parents: John and Almeda Landis Grove (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Holloway, Adam Jr., John Grove; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 12 at Chambersburg, Pa.

Bradshaw, Margaret Knipping, 76, Bloomington, Ill., died April 17 of cancer. Spouse: Kenneth Bradshaw (deceased). Parents: Louis and Mary Knipping (deceased). Survivors: son Doug Poag; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at Bloomington.

Curran, Donald, 76, Phoenix, died May 9 of cancer. Spouse: Carol Curran. Parents: Fredrick and Florence Curran (deceased). Funeral: May 12 at First Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Davidhizar, Otis, 89, Wakarusa, Ind., died May 4 of a stroke. Spouse: Mary Davidhizar. Parents: Enos and Martha Butler Davidhizar (deceased). Other survivors: children Eleanor Shoup, Nancy Parcell, James; seven grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 9 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa.

Eicher, James, 74, Archbold, Ohio, died May 3. Spouse: Grace Stamm Eicher. Parents: Arthur and Bertha Eicher (deceased). Other survivors: children Jeanette Rice, Joyce Bedsworth, David, Peter, Curt; 14 grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Gerber, Willard, 80, Shipshewana, Ind., died May 7. Spouse: Clara Miller Gerber (deceased). Parents: John and Alta Umstead Gerber (deceased). Foster parents: Ammon and Katie Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Marlene Stutzman, Richard, Philip; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 10 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Glick, Jesse, 91, Belleville, Pa., died May 8. Spouse: Margaret Heckman Glick. Parents: Gideon and Nannie Yoder Glick (deceased). Other survivors: children Jesse Jr., John; two grandchildren. Funeral: May 12 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Goering, Elmer, 84, Moundridge, Kan., died April 25, Spouse: Gladys Goering. Other survivors: children Jon, Wynn. Funeral: April 28 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge, Kan.

Hackman, Lester Moyer, 87, Des Allemands, La., died May 9. Spouse: Mabel Wenger Hackman. Parents: Henry and Annie Moyer Hackman (deceased). Other survivors: children Gordon, Robert, Lester Jr., Polly Duhé, Frances Wood. Funeral service: May 9 and 10 at Des Allemands Mennonite Church.

Hershberger, James, 83, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died May 14 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Esther Miller Hershberger. Parents: Len and Alta Hostetler Hershberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Mark, Joel, Constance Monaghan, Malinda Hershberger Hershberger; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: May 18 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Janzen, Erna, 79, Goessel, Kan., died May 13. Parents: Dietrich and Lena Schmidt Janzen (deceased). Funeral: May 17 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Kauffman, Archie "Junior," 63, Albany, Ore., died May 11 of a heart attack. Parents: Archie and Edna Hershberger Kauffman (deceased). Memorial service: May 17 at Albany, Ore.

Kropf, Seleda Everatt, 89, Kitchener, Ont., died May 3. Spouse: Lorne Kropf (deceased). Parents: John and Catherine Brunk Everatt (deceased). Survivors: children Marlene Ueberschlag, James; three grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Miller, Chris, 95, Freeman, S.D., died May 1. Spouse: Helen Graber Miller (deceased). Parents: Jonathan and Anna Graber Miller (deceased). Survivors: daughter Judy Gross; two grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Roszhart, Ethel Bernice, 89, Chenoa, Ill., died April 27. Spouse: George Roszhart (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Elizabeth Salzman Stalter (deceased). Survivors: daughter Evelyn May; five grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 1 at Waldo Mennonite Church, Flanagan, Ill.

Stamm, Denver, 72, Archbold, Ohio, died May 3. Spouse: Jeanne Stamm. Parents: Gustar and Priscilla Stamm (deceased). Other survivors: children Mark, Tina Lange, Tana Sauder; eight grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at Stryker, Ohio.

classifieds

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., has ***paid counselor positions*** available June 20-August 13. Call 802-672-3959.

- **Belleville Mennonite School** needs a ***high school English teacher*** beginning August 1999. Please contact Ray Baker, superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is seeking full-time teachers in ***mathematics, English and Spanish***. Send resume to Barbara Moses, principal, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Olive Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***pastor*** with ministry to youth and young adults as the primary focus. Send resume or inquiry to Gary Miller, 28697 CR 30W, Elkhart, IN 46517; 219-862-2679 or email Olivemenn@juno.com.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church** has an opening for paid half-time ***minister of visitation and senior care***. Job description available from Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526 or email irvin@npcc.net. Resumes accepted through June 22.

- **Herald Press** seeks ***office manager*** of Congregational Publishing. Manage the day-to-day operations with office, marketing and editorial responsibilities. Proficiency in word processing and business systems expected.

  Contact Awanda Pritts, Human Resources, Herald Press, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; 724-887-8500; email Apritts@mph.org

- **Wanted:** Visionary ***CEO*** who is an innovative "student" of change for Schowalter Villa, a retirement community in Hesston, Kan. Important characteristics include collaboration and team-building skills, clear communication and fiscal responsibility. Prefer experience in health care or older adult housing and services. Strong Christian faith and character also important.

  Contact Tim Stair at Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Mennonite Indemnity, Inc.,** a church-based company promoting mutual aid through property and casualty insurance, seeks to fill two new leadership positions.

  Director of information systems: Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience in information systems and five years in systems analysis, design and management. Leadership, planning, relational and communication skills needed.

  Director of insurance: Bachelor's degree in a business-related field. Three to five years of experience in the P&C industry; familiar with insurance filings and products. Strong leadership, analytical, relational and communication skills needed. CPCU or other insurance designation preferred.

  Please mail, fax or email resumes with cover letter and salary expectations to Mennonite Indemnity Inc., 704 Main St., Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; fax 717-859-3983; email lkuhns@miiaba.com

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Oaklawn Outpatient Services** in Elkhart, Ind., has openings for experienced ***clinical social workers*** who enjoy working with children and families. Provide social assessments and therapy services to families and children; work with schools, social service agencies, courts and families to identify and meet needs of children and youth; competitive salary and fringe benefits. If you have an MSW, clinical experience working with families, and Indiana licensure, please contact us.

  Contact Oaklawn, 330 Lakeview Drive, P.O. Box 809, Goshen, IN 46527; 800-282-0809. EEO/AA

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes**, a growing continuing care retirement community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs. Master's in divinity, CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resume with salary requirements to 215-723-9876, attn. Lisa Peirce; or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***computer instructor*** to teach a variety of courses in the fields of Web authoring and design, Microsoft business applications, networking and programming. Qualifications: teaching experience, innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church, graduate degree preferred. Hesston College will support the candidate in the pursuit of professional certifications (CNE/CNI, MCSE/MCT). Full-time position available August 11.

  Contact academic dean Marc Yoder, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Rockway Mennonite Church**, located in Kitchener, Ont., is searching for a ***pastor/pastoral team*** (up to one FTE). We are an urban, largely professional congregation of approximately 150 members. Our members take active leadership roles and regularly share the pulpit with the pastor. We seek a strong preacher with a keen sense of the aesthetics of worship who will be able to minister to all ages. Our pastor will provide teaching of Scripture, theology and church history within an Anabaptist framework.

  Please contact Glyn Jones, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada representative, 519-634-8511; or email Glyn-Jon@ionline.net. Application deadline June 30, 1999.

- **Mennonite Health Assembly** seeks ***workshop proposals*** for the 48th annual assembly, March 23-26, 2000, in Williamsburg, Va. Theme areas include ethics, leadership, congregational health ministry, mental health, spirituality and health, and pastoral care. Participants are professionals and trustees involved in health and social ministry. Deadline for proposals is June 16, 1999.

  For more information, contact Mim Shirk, 219-534-9689; fax 219-534-3254; email mimshirk@compuserve.com

- **Waterford Mennonite Church**, a 400-member congregation located in Goshen Ind., seeks a ***minister of worship and music*** to lead and resource blended worship. Work includes demonstrating and involving members in worship planning, worship leading and music. Effective communicator, musical versatility, able to plan and stimulate positive team relationships, encourage and empower involvement of people of all ages. Degree from Anabaptist-Mennonite seminary preferred. This position, along with other pastoral team responsibilities, could be a full-time position.

  Contact Joseph S. Miller, pastor, 65975 State Road 15, Goshen, IN 46526; email josmiller@juno.com

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 300) invites applications for 1999-2000 for high school teaching positions in ***social studies*** (50%), ***mathematics*** (60%), and ***biology/environmental science*** (full-time, one-year term). Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is hiring a full-time ***director of development***. The position would officially begin in August 1999. Particular qualifications include good communication skills, a strong belief in Mennonite education, ability to work with a variety of people in schools, churches and the community. Experience in an education, church or business setting preferred. Bachelor's degree preferred but not required.

  Send letter of application and vita to Crist Peachey, administrator, Manheim Christian Day School, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following:

  MBA program director: Provide leadership to new MBA program. Position open immediately. Send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu

  Washington Study-Service Year co-director: Master's preferred. Appointment fall 1999. WSSY is a service-learning program for college students. Individual must be committed to urban renewal and community service. Send letter of application and resume to Melissa Aberle-Grasse, WSSY-EMU, 3116 S. Dakota Ave. NE, Washington, DC 20018; email wssy@aol.com

- **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** in north central Indiana. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus; serve up to 40 congregations and their pastors; and be a member of the staff ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2000, and will have at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

  Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references by June 11, 1999, to IN-MI Conference Search Committee, c/o Mary Swartley, 57697 Seventh St., Elkhart, IN 46517. For more information, call Mary Swartley at 219-522-0314; email mswartley@aol.com

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following:

  Women's softball coach to lead intercollegiate varsity sport. If interested, please send letter of application, resume and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim academic dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105. AAEOE

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  Disability support services coordinator. Provide disability support services to students with documented learning disabilities. Master's degree in related field and knowledge of the ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If interested, please send a letter of application, resume and three references to Marie Morris, interim associate dean, EMU, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105. AAEOE

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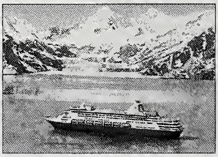

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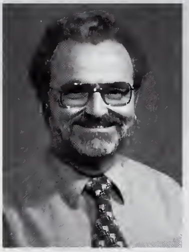

J. Lorne Peachey

When good things happen to bad people

April 16 was a Friday for me that started out good—then got better. That was not what I expected, even though it was my 60th birthday. I was scheduled to spend the day flying from Pittsburgh to Portland, Ore., through my least favorite terminal, Chicago's O'Hare.

Boarding the plane, I saw an empty row toward the back, which I took instead of my assigned seat by the window next to a couple already seat-belted in. It was a fortuitous move, since we ended up sitting on the runway for 2½ hours as thunderstorm after thunderstorm rumbled across the airport. Unlike most of the other passengers in that cramped Boeing 737, I had room to stretch, work, read, even nap.

The next leg got even better. Again, the plane was almost full, but no one was assigned to sit in the seat between me and a grandmother who did just the right amount of talking and keeping quiet to make the four-hour flight enjoyable. I was also on the side that, with rare clear skies, allowed me to see Mt. Hood, Mt. Jefferson and the Three Sisters as the plane approached Portland. Then, as we banked for a landing into the prevailing east winds, I saw Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Adams. For once I wouldn't have minded circling for more views of the Pacific Northwest's snow-capped peaks that always have me saying, "Wow!"

God's role in making good things happen is a mystery I am content to live with. But I am convinced God delights when I enjoy the good that comes into my life.

Things got even better on the ground: a queen-sized room at the price of a regular at the hotel I had booked for a professional convention; an open table at the Oyster Bar, my favorite seafood restaurant; a warning rather than a ticket when I exceeded the speed limit in my early-morning eagerness to get to the Pacific Ocean; clam chowder for breakfast at Mo's, just because a waitress thought it important this Easterner experience what he remembered from living here 35 years ago; a full day of sunshine, a rarity in April on Oregon's coast.

"Why are all these good things happening to me?" I was asking by this time. I couldn't think of many reasons why they should be—and a lot of why they shouldn't. Why do good things happen? Is it fate? Good luck? God?

Jews and Christians have spent centuries pondering the question of evil. From Job, a most ancient book of the Bible, to Harold Kushner, who wrote the 1981 best seller *Why Bad Things Happen to Good People*, the question is the same: Where is God in difficult circumstances in our lives? Although millennia apart, the answers have also been similar: We cannot know the mind of God, but we do know God is with us when we experience evil.

But what about good things, particularly when we know we don't deserve them? Why does good happen to people who are self-centered, egotistical and stubborn—as I find myself being too much of the time? What is God's role in all this?

Some say good things happen as a reward, that the more we do right, the more we can expect what's good. There's even a brand of theology that allows one to get rich, have good relationships or realize one's dreams through prayer, hard work and right living. In other words, good responses from God can be manipulated by human endeavor.

That's not a God I warm to—or one I find living in much of Scripture. The God who makes much more sense to me is the one I found in Psalm 18:19 during my "good" West Coast trip: "[God] rescues me because he delights in me."

God delights in me? In what happens to me?

The world I live in is full of good and evil. Through the Scriptures I've come to realize God is with me when I encounter both. God holds my hand, comforts, supports and occasionally convicts and chides me when I meet evil: violence, hatred, sin, illness, death, separation. This God is also with me when I experience the good, delighting in my enjoyment of beauty, creativity, relationships, love, peace—and when things go "right."

God's role in making good things happen is a mystery I am content to live with. At the same time, I am convinced God would have me enjoy the good that comes into my life. When I do, the psalmist tells me, God finds great delight in me.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

June 15, 1999

BIENVENIDOS

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Columbine, culture and corrections

Although I too feel the need to identify (and, admittedly, categorize) the causes of the horrific tragedy at Littleton, Colo., I cannot endorse Mark Chupp's method of doing so ("Lessons From Littleton," May 18). In particular, I was surprised and disturbed by his careless characterization of the members of the Gothic subculture as white supremacists and advocates of the "glorification of Nazi Germany." The Gothic movement has nothing to do with racism, hate crimes or violence of any kind. Goths are introverted and nonviolent people who derive aesthetic pleasure from Victorian clothing and pipe organs; their only connection with white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups is a tendency to wear black. (Marilyn Manson, who is popularly perceived as a representative of the Gothic subculture and whose lyrics are designed to offend Christians as well as many other mainstream groups, has no affiliation with the Gothic movement.)

As a Mennonite college student outside the Gothic subculture, I have found much to admire in my Goth acquaintances' appreciation for the arts and peaceable lifestyle. If you choose to comment on a counterculture, please be sure to research it rather than merely report its popular image.—*Sarah Kortemeier, Houston*

In Mark Chupp's helpful article, points nine and 10 need some correction. He identifies a "rollback of affirmative-action laws" as racism. These laws now actually require reverse discrimination and are racist. We agree, surely, that having just one more round of war, for revenge, does not end war. Likewise, another round of discrimination doesn't end discrimination.

It is a common myth, but not true, that "males … end up committing the vast majority of all violence." Violence by women against children is just one of several countercategories. A short letter allows no space for details, but I hope the facts in articles will be well checked.

I suggest that one reason for many events like Littleton is our current cultural disdain for males, some of whom become desperate. —*Ronald Rich, Bluffton, Ohio*

Dangerous debate

Kenneth Gibble's "Baptism Is Dangerous" (May 25) is a simple yet profound description of Christianity. In a few short lines, he answers extended debates concerning church membership for the new Mennonite Church. We are all members of the Christian church family, the family of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Gibble says, "Baptism means you are part of this family, the church, this worldwide conglomeration of baptized people known as the body of Christ." What does this suggest about Jesus' words in Matthew 7:1, "Judge not, that ye be not judged"?—*Reuben Krehbiel, McPherson, Kan.*

A setback

I was frustrated at *The Mennonite* for giving Roberta Showalter Kreider's letter space in Readers Say ("An Expanded Vision," May 18). It was written as publicity rather than as a response to something in the magazine. But as I thought about it further, I decided that you must have been between a rock and a hard place, that maybe this was a compromise between putting it in the news section and not putting it anywhere.

Several in my congregation last year greeted every new issue of *The Mennonite* with joy. A couple months ago, they told me that they do so no longer, largely because the Readers Say section was getting to them. I fear Kreider's letter will be a setback to the restoration of their eagerness and joy.

May the Spirit of God's wisdom be full within you, as it was within Solomon, as you make all these difficult decisions.—*Harold Miller, Corning, N.Y.*

Beyond the war machine's reach

Regarding the discussion of war taxes, I would like to register a legal way to avoid paying that I haven't seen mentioned yet: live and earn your income abroad. U.S. citizens can exclude up to $72,000 (1998) of foreign earned income (they are taxed on worldwide income) as long as they meet the IRS requirements for the foreign country being their "tax home" or for being "bona fide residents" of the foreign country.

The United States is not the only place to live. Entrepreneurial and vocational skills coupled with Christian morality and a work ethic are needed in the Third World. So why not live where your grass-roots involvement in the local economy can make a small difference in Third World development and where you will legally not need to help support the U.S. war machine?

After over eight years of living in Panama, my wife, three children and I have attained permanent residency status (all the duties and

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readers say

privileges of citizens except vote) but are also still U.S. citizens. In these eight years of dairy farming in Panama, I have been required to pay U.S. self-employment taxes (Social Security) but have not needed to pay any U.S. income tax. (And with an exclusion of up to $72,000, I do not anticipate needing to pay any.) I'm liable for Panamanian income tax but, as a dairy farmer, have not yet needed to pay any.—*Jacob Tice, Concepcion, Panama*

A disservice to the church

I have been reading the new *The Mennonite* for months to see how it evolves. I have discovered that I miss a quality from one of the predecessor magazines which seems to have been dropped since the combination. I would like to see a strong spiritual teaching brought back. Some churches follow a tradition of multiple services during the week. Wednesday and even Sunday evening services have been lost. I had used the previous magazine as my midweek spiritual regeneration in place of not having midweek church services. This was a source of strength for me, which I sincerely miss.

If *The Mennonite* wants to report politics, tragedies and world affairs (May 18 issue), then I must point out *Time, Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* all satisfy that need. If *The Mennonite* wants to focus reporting on peace and justice issues and how world governments act, then I must point out *Peace Magazine* from Canada does a better job. But if *The Mennonite* wants to teach as Jesus did, then I welcome those stories which relate to the teaching chosen for that week. But *The Mennonite* must have a spiritual teaching lesson at the center of the magazine instead of letting the stories and reporting become the center. Without a spiritual center, *The Mennonite* does a disservice to the affiliation with the church.—*Evan Bontrager, Monee, Ill.*

Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt

The ABCs of Mennonite worship

by Rod Stafford

Some things, no matter how well we know them, are hard to describe. When I was a teenager, my mother asked me to try something she called a kiwi fruit. It was small, brown and hairy. It apparently didn't belong to any of my four basic food groups—sugar, fat, preservatives and fries. I was skeptical.

"What's it taste like?" I asked.

Her response didn't help: "Well, sorta like a strawberry … or maybe a banana … kinda like a peach." Despite that introduction, I have been eating (and enjoying) kiwis for years. They are still not easy to describe.

I have also been attending Mennonite worship services for years. They are no easier to describe: "Sorta like a Presbyterian church without the robes … or maybe a Vineyard but with four-part singing … kinda like a Baptist church without the altar call." Mennonite worship covers the spectrum—from charismatic to traditional, from seeker-service to high church.

On any given Sunday, one might hear four-part, a cappella singing in Indiana or a loud, rocking praise band in Kansas. A newer, progressive, urban congregation sings 19th-century Fanny Crosby hymns, and an old, rural Mennonite church sings soft rock, contemporary Christian music. We use different books, follow different patterns, incorporate different symbols.

What is Mennonite worship? We have no *Book of Common Prayer* like the Episcopalians (though some of us borrow freely); we don't speak in tongues like the Pentecostals (at least not all of us). Unlike walking into a Catholic church and immediately knowing where you are, a Mennonite meetinghouse gives few clues.

The very diversity of our practices reflects something important about us. We have long believed that faith is contextual—it must be lived out among particular people, at a particular place and time. As such, local churches can best be attentive and responsive to the movements of God in Christ through the Spirit. And so we trust congregations to discern faithfully how best to be present with this God in our gatherings for worship.

For all our differences, though, we are still connected. We are all Mennonites. Though there are no common forms or style in our worship, we share a story, we share commitments, we share practices. In the midst of our diversity, it is worth asking how those deeper themes shape our services in distinctly Anabaptist ways.

The very diversity of our practices reflects something important about us. We have long believed that faith is contextual—it must be lived out among particular people, at a particular place and time.

I offer my own ABCs of Mennonite identity and worship:

Alternative community: We Mennonites have always understood ourselves to be part of a distinctive people, called out to follow faithfully the way of Jesus, in whom there is no longer Jew or Greek, rich or poor, north or south, male and female. Against the impulse to distance ourselves, to value some more than others, we have all been made one in Christ.

That new identity has significant implications for the posture of our gatherings. Everyone is welcome; each person's gifts are valued. Among other things, it is significant that titles are not used in our services. When I first attended a Mennonite church, I was struck that someone I knew to be a medical doctor was simply Janet, and a prominent university professor was Bill to everybody there.

Instead of deferring to the experts and the artists, it is important to find places for wide participation. At Park View Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va., for example, associate pastor Shirley Yoder Brubaker has invited seventh and eighth graders to join her in preparing and offering the pastoral prayer. In our services, can a child read, however haltingly, the day's gospel lesson? Can an adult, who has only just taken up the mandolin, pick out a prelude?

Beyond borders: From the Anabaptist angle of vision, Mennonites have been able to see more clearly the wide embrace of God's mercy that reaches across the boundaries of time and space. Against the narrow visions of nationalism and modernism, Christ's kingdom extends beyond our borders.

Through our music such a hope can be embedded in on our services. The temptation will always be to sing the music we know and like, or to sing the music we think "seekers" know and like. Nothing wrong there—the gospel of God's grace is contemporary, here and now. But for our repertoire to be truthful to who we are, it must also include the ancient music of our brothers and sisters across the centuries and the hymns of other cultures and places.

Hymnal: A Worship Book can be a wonderfully helpful resource. A number of the hymns included were first introduced to Mennonites in North America at Mennonite World Conference assemblies, where we publicly experience the international nature of the church. With "so great a cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews

Let us raise our voices in praise to the encompassing God of heaven and earth.

12:1), let us raise our voices in praise to the encompassing God of heaven and earth.

Continuing story: As "people of the Book," Mennonites claim the biblical story as our own. We understand ourselves to be part of the great river of God's people, begun long before us, extending far beyond us. As such, we give special attention to the narrative of God's involvement with God's world. We acknowledge both the certain continuity of a faithful God and the surprising innovation of a dynamic God.

Seeing ourselves as part of this continuing gospel story has meaning for the way we incorporate the Bible in our services. At a minimum, readings from both the Old Testament and the New should be included in each service. And because we believe God speaks still, our gatherings need the space and structure to allow us to listen and discern together. Silence might be an important element. Perhaps time for dialogue about the texts and/or sermon can be created.

Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., uses alternative ways of proclaiming the Word. Karmen Fehr, an Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary student from Canada, frequently scripts the biblical texts. Joining a few others and using minimal costuming, they make the old stories contemporary.

Deep concern: If we weren't so doggone humble, one of the things Mennonites could be most proud of is our legacy of care and compassion for all those God loves. Whether cleaning up after a tornado with Mennonite Disaster Service or empowering poor women by selling their crafts through the Ten Thousand Villages program of Mennonite Central Committee, a deep concern for God's love and justice is central to our faith.

That concern can be given voice in the prayers of our services. We include our petitions for the hopes and needs of ourselves, our families and our congregations. But we must also persistently include the hopes and needs of the neighborhoods and villages, the inner cities and expanding deserts of God's good creation. Prayer can be a powerful form of protest against what is, against the brokenness and systemic evil that mar our lives and our world. Prayer can also be a powerful means of transformation as we entrust ourselves to God and commit ourselves to the biblical vision of shalom.

John Rempel, pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship, regularly notes specific concerns of the broader church and society-at-large. These are incorporated into a calendar for intercessory prayer, and each week the worship leader is responsible to include those concerns in the prayers of the people. Another simple but significant way we might pray together is to regularly include the Lord's Prayer in our worship, a practice particularly appropriate for people once known as Sermon on the Mount Christians.

Engaged love: Because God has loved us, we ought also to love one another—neighbor, stranger, enemy. That simple and spectacularly difficult command sets the trajectory for our ongoing worship the rest of the week. The Eastern Orthodox Church speaks of "liturgy after the liturgy." Our work (liturgy) continues after our worship (liturgy) ends.

The essentially missional character of the church must be reflected in our services so that Sunday is linked to the work and study, decisions and disagreements, play and politics of Monday through Saturday. Whether through moments in mission, announcements of service and advocacy opportunities, or benedictions that send us out to be God's people in God's world, love must be actively engaged.

The essentially missional character of the church must be reflected in our services so that Sunday is linked to the work and study, decisions and disagreements, play and politics of Monday through Saturday.

At First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis, for example, people of the congregation are working with other faith communities to bring faith physically into zones of violence. Half a dozen members are on standby, ready to be called whenever a murder occurs. Within 24 hours, they gather with people from a variety of churches, as close as possible to the site of the murder, and pray.

The list could go on. But F through Z still might not adequately describe the spectrum of Mennonite worship. The form and feel of our services will always vary widely. Amid our diversity, however, may we yet find ways to give common expression to the deep faith that holds us together as followers of Christ.

Rod Stafford is pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan.

What do we sin

Marilyn Nolt

To many, a Mennonite gathering without singing would be like a potluck without green Jell-O.

by Christy Risser

At a recent Sweet Honey in the Rock concert in Goshen, Ind., Mary Oyer, professor emeritus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., was called upon to lead the more than 1,300 concertgoers in a hymn.

A bemused Carol Maillard, the African-American singing group's spokesperson for the evening, announced that Mary would be leading everyone in something called 606. As Mary motioned for all to rise, she hummed a single note, and the Goshen College Union Auditorium veritably burst with the strains of what has been called the Mennonite anthem by some .

For more than a century, four-part a cappella hymn singing has been a strong tradition among Mennonites in North America. To many, a Mennonite gathering without singing would be like a potluck without green Jell-O.

"We have many testimonies to the fact that music does work in a group of believers," Mary says. "Each of us could speak to singing experiences we have had that have brought surprising moments of insight or have transported us beyond our usual realm of knowing and being."

Mary, who worked on compiling both the 1969 *Mennonite Hymnal* and the 1992 *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (HWB), feels the importance of both the poetry and the music of hymns is powerful to one's worship experience as a whole.

"We noticed that when we sang a text in question [while compiling the 1969 hymnal], we suddenly had clarity about whether it would work in worship," Mary says. "The gathering hymn draws people from their personal circle of thought and experience into a group relationship. It provides a bridge between our individualistic activities and the body of Christ. It must be a welcome and invitation, rather than an imposition.

"If the ethos of the group is bright and cheerful, 'Come We That Love the Lord' could

hen we are at war?

To honestly and openly as a worshiping community acknowledge our grief and suffering over world events is to invite God's action into our daily lives.

be a good choice. But I have difficulty opening with that kind of hymn in the context of the current national and international scene. What do we sing when we are at war?"

For Mary, opening with triumphant marches, filled with joy and victory create an artificial division between the world of worship and the world of life.

Our daily lives: "Our worship must be an extension of our lives," she says. "If it is disconnected from our daily living, then we can easily disconnect the teachings of Jesus and the whole Bible from our daily lives. And as far as I can tell, that is most certainly not what we are called to do."

Pointing particularly to the gathering hymns with which many congregations begin worship, Mary suggests that in this time of war in Kosovo and Serbia, in this time of massacres in Littleton, Colo., and tornadoes in Kansas, Texas and Oklahoma, perhaps gathering hymns of lament that honestly recognize our pain are more in order.

"From the depths of sin and sadness
I have called unto the Lord.
Be not deaf to my poor pleading
in your mercy, hear my voice.
For the Lord my heart is waiting
for God's word I hope and wait.
More than watchers wait for sunrise,
I am waiting for the Lord."

HWB 136 is a Russian folk melody that uses the words of Psalm 130 to enter into the waiting and watching for God to speak in the midst of the congregation. For Mary, this is an appropriate gathering hymn for the faithful who are feeling helpless in the midst of suffering that screams out from the television, radio and newspaper front pages.

From one of the countries that made up the former Yugoslavia comes a hymn that finds some purpose in the suffering. This Croatian hymn, accompanied by a Slavic melody, is HWB 550:

"Living and dying with Jesus our Lord,
no greater joy can the whole world afford.
Whether in suffering, even while dying,
joy beyond measure is our reward.
Life lived for Jesus yet while it's day,
sad lowering darkness can't long hold sway.
Fervently serving, losing heart never,
God's lavish grace guards all on the way."

Mary says this hymn will perhaps "remind us that the people we are bombing are Christians, too."

A simple reminder that ironically falls in the doubt/faith section of HWB is the Spanish "Nada te turbe": "Let nothing trouble you. Let nothing frighten you. Whoever has God lacks nothing."

"Come, Ye Disconsolate" (HWB 497), often in popular use during the season of Lent, is an invitation and a lament rolled into one. Musically, Mary says, it takes you both up into the heights and down into grief.

"In the final line, 'Earth has no sorrows that Heaven cannot heal,' we begin the line on the G, soar up to the E and finally work our way back down to middle C," she says. "Vocally and in the poetry, 'Come Ye Disconsolate' pushes and pulls us as a congregation to acknowledge the ebb and flow of our grief."

Not only in gathering can congregations utilize the breadth and depth of music represented in the hymnal to express their feelings in the context of worship, Mary says.

"When we pray, we can pray with hymns like number 367, 'For the Healing of the Nations,' or perhaps we could use the 'Kyrie Eleison' (HWB 144), which means, 'Lord have mercy,' in conjunction with the 'Veni Sanctus Spiritus' (HWB 298)," she says. "And we can pray with number 377, 'Healer of Our Every Ill,' or 372, 'O Healing River.'

"The point is that we must not be bound by the headings in the hymnal. They are only there as a guide. Hopefully they are helpful, but they are not holy. We must become familiar with the hymnal and be willing to push ourselves a bit outside our comfort zone musically and poetically."

To honestly and openly as a worshiping community acknowledge our grief and suffering over world events is to invite God's action into our daily lives. Music, that powerful force in the Mennonite church, says Mary, also has the power to allow the body of Christ to "[weep] through the music for those who are suffering."

Christy Risser is a writer in Goshen, Ind.

Our worship must be an extension of our lives. If it is disconnected from our daily living, then we can easily disconnect the teachings of Jesus and the whole Bible from our daily lives.

—Mary Oyer

J. Tyler Klassen

Pennsylvania program wants to be place of peace for young people struggling with eating disorders

DAVIDSVILLE, Pa.—For the estimated 10 percent of young people who have struggled or will struggle with anorexia, bulimia and other eating disorders, churchly expectations may be part of the problem. But Karla Croyle believes the church can also be part of the answer.

A nutrition therapist, Croyle sees nearly two dozen young people with eating disorders. But in addition to her private counseling, she and her congregation, Carpenter Park Mennonite Church in Davidsville, have been providing education and support for individuals, schools and churches.

Most people with eating disorders are females between the ages of 15 and 23, although there are increasing numbers of young men with such problems. Many come from middle- and upper-class homes. Most are Anglo and come with strong drives to achieve.

But Croyle notes one other characteristic. "Eating disorders are more prevalent in churches," she says. "Almost all of the young women I've worked with have had some sort of spirituality in their life. In a Christian home, there are a lot of expectations to be a good girl, to get good grades, and they feel that they can't measure up."

> **In a Christian home, there are a lot of expectations to be a good girl, to get good grades, and they feel that they can't measure up.**
>
> *—Karla Croyle*

Croyle and Carpenter Park started their program early last year, with the help of a grant from Mennonite Mutual Aid. Called EDEN (Eating Disorder Education Network), the program offers workshops and seminars and a resource library for further education. EDEN aims to educate the church about identifying and responding to people with eating disorders. All services have been free, although that may change in order to give the program better financial stability.

The program's name was chosen for a specific reason, Croyle says. EDEN evokes images of the garden of Eden, a serene and beautiful place. Croyle says her goal is to "help these girls find that place of peace in their unrest."

"They don't feel like they deserve to be loved," she adds. "The church is a place where we can reach out to these girls."

Croyle sometimes brings clients and other contacts to Carpenter Park. "I share myself with them, and hopefully they will share themselves with me," she says. "I invite people to come to church, hoping that people will experience God."

Steve Kriss

Sandra Haynes (right) of Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa., studies eating disorders with Karla Croyle of EDEN, the congregation's eating disorders program. Education is one facet of the year-old program.

The congregation is committed to supporting Croyle's work and to offering a welcoming environment. And that has meant becoming well educated about eating disorders.

"We can be a closed church, concerned only about ourselves, but that is not Carpenter Park," says elder Mel Blough. "We want to be involved in the community. This is another way of reaching people, another witnessing opportunity."

Croyle has spoken to every age group, from preschool to senior citizen, and has been involved with local colleges and with Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. She will also speak at St. Louis 99.

Her presentations often explore issues of body image and the idea that God has created people in sizes that differ, just like eye or hair color. Croyle also wants to expose hidden, lonely struggles of individuals with eating disorders and their families.

"We didn't want to make it public because it's embarrassing," says the mother of a young woman with eating disorders who is a Carpenter Park member. "We tried to take care of it just with the family and the doctor. We didn't have anywhere to turn."

Exposing the secrets and naming the eating disorders, Croyle says, allows those suffering from them to respond positively and develop a different self-perspective. "They realize then that the eating disorder is separate from themselves," she says.—*Steve Kriss*

Success drives MEDA ventures buggy

Growth of Bolivian credit co-ops means facing Y2K

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia—In the boardroom of the San Luis savings and credit cooperative in Santa Cruz, credit manager Marioly Alvarez apologizes for the general manager's absence.

"He's at a Y2K seminar today," Alvarez says.

If having the same problems as counterparts in the United States and Canada can be seen as a sign of progress, then San Luis has come far. Started by Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) in the early 1990s to help poor entrepreneurs, the fully computerized organization now needs to make sure all its programs work come Jan. 1, 2000, so that its 15,000 members can continue to receive services.

A similar story is playing out 20 miles away in El Torno, home to Progreso, another credit cooperative started by MEDA. Today it has 2,800 members, a portfolio of $1 million and a repayment rate of 93 percent.

"We had to grow," says credit manager José Vásquez. "Although we started as an agricultural co-op, our members wanted more services; they placed more demands on us.

"We also had to become more professional," he says, gesturing toward the office computer.

Of course, professionalism has its price. Progreso now needs to upgrade the computer to make it Y2K compliant.

Which brings a smile to the face of Allan Sauder, who directs MEDA's international programs. He isn't taking wicked pleasure in the two cooperatives' problem. Rather, he sees it as a sign of how far they have come.

"It's just amazing to see how they've grown," Sauder says. "Now they have to deal with the same technological problems as the rest of the world."

Another sign of progress is the increasingly larger amounts that businesses want to borrow from the two co-ops. Where borrowers used to ask for $300 to $500 to help their small businesses, today San Luis, which has a portfolio of $6 million, receives requests for larger amounts. Why? Because those once-small businesses have grown into mid-size and larger enterprises.

Take Felix Calisaya, for example. The furnituremaker received his first loan of $600 six years ago, using the money to buy new equipment. His business is now worth $50,000. He has 12 employees and does $2,000 to $3,000 a month in sales of handcrafted tables, chairs and other items. Calisaya's last loan was for $4,000, and he hopes to move his operation to a new industrial park.

"I'm outgrowing my present space," Calisaya says.

A few streets away, Lizet Huanca proudly shows off her family's clothing factory. Their first loan was $400 for material; now they are looking at a $5,000 loan to buy a specialized piece of equipment to make more items like "hipsters"—baggy jeans they export to Brazil.

"Our goal was to help small businesses grow," says Alejandro Escobar, MEDA's Bolivia country manager. "The problems which result are good problems. It shows we're on the cutting edge."—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

EMM photo by Jerrold Grosh

Built with great stones

On a site once confiscated by Ethiopia's Marxist government, workers raise the walls of a new Meserete Kristos Church meeting place in Metehara, Ethiopia. The congregation's construction is one of 151 church buildings built or improved over the last five years with financial assistance from MKC (the Ethiopian Mennonite Church) and supported by Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Bagel run makes bread for MCC

Peter Dyck carried the bagel around for eight years. Ulli Klemm carried it for 26 miles.

Dyck, well-known storyteller and former Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker, has been using the rock-hard bagel for children's stories about world hunger, often quoting the adage: "Old bread is not hard. No bread—that's hard."

After Dyck gave his presentation at Pittsburgh Mennonite Church earlier this year, congregation member Klemm decided the bagel would be a perfect prop for his fund-raising run in the Pittsburgh Marathon. He had collected pledges to be sent to MCC.

So in last month's race, Klemm attached the bagel to his shirt, along with a sign that said, "If this bagel crosses the finish line, over $4,000 will be raised for the emergency relief work of Mennonite Central Committee."

Klemm says he received great affirmation from his fellow runners, one of whom offered to carry the bagel to the end if Klemm wasn't able to.

But he was able, crossing the line in 3 hours and 47 minutes. As a result, MCC got $5,748. And Dyck got his bagel back.

Change brings change as new service unit affects members' vocational directions

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.—Lethbridge Mennonite Church couldn't wait.

In March 1998, the congregation decided to sponsor a Service Adventure unit. In just six months, the church formed a support committee, arranged funding, rented a house for the unit and found work assignments for participants. In August, the first Canadian Service Adventure unit opened in Lethbridge with five 19-year-old women and a young married couple.

"We worked like dogs," says Jan Wiebe-Neufeldt of the congregation's Service Adventure unit support committee. "We didn't have the patience to wait for another year."

Service Adventure, a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions, offers year-long service assignments for young people. Lethbridge saw the addition of the unit as part of broader congregational changes. Within the past year, the 70-member congregation also completed a new church building and welcomed a new pastor.

"As we finished the new building, there was momentum, the church was doing things," says support committee member Dave Wiebe-Neufeldt. "Church isn't just what happens in a building on Sunday morning but what happens outside that building during the week as well."

> **Church isn't just what happens in a building on Sunday morning but what happens outside that building during the week as well.**
>
> *—Dave Wiebe-Neufeldt*

The congregation's new vision has produced changes for the new unit's members. All of them are now considering new vocations.

Unit leaders Christie and Keith Funk-Froese had been farming at Rosenfeld, Man. Now they are contemplating pastoral ministry when their term ends next year.

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GCMC-MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Service Adventure worker Emily Fitz (sitting) and Val Watts of the HIV Connection in Lethbridge, Alta., discuss the design of a brochure about the dangers of sharing needles. Creating brochures was part of Fitz's assignment at the HIV Connection.

"Farming was good, but ... we felt God calling us in a different direction," Christie Funk-Froese says.

Unit member Heidi Goerzen, from Carstairs, Alta., thought she would study interior design next year. But her Service Adventure assignment was with an organization that provides jobs for mentally challenged adults in a greenhouse and woodshop. Now Goerzen plans to study greenhouse management.

Jackie Graham from Hamilton, Ont., wanted to be a paramedic. But after working in a health center and a Ten Thousand Villages store, she feels called to go to Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg to prepare for overseas service. Such study, she says, "is perfect for me because I want to do more service."

Janell Martin from East Earl, Pa., planned to move back to Lancaster County and "just work," she says. Instead, she will participate in Mennonite Voluntary Service to test social work as a possible career, a result of serving in a Lethbridge emergency shelter.

Emily Fitz from Chicago serves with a nonprofit HIV education organization. She had been thinking of physical therapy as a career. But now she wants to pursue other kinds of service opportunities by traveling to Guatemala to study Spanish and then to El Salvador.

Before entering Service Adventure, where she works with people with disabilities, Steffi Knirlberger of Worms, Germany, wanted to be a speech therapist. But she has decided to return to Germany to study ecology.—*Bethany Swope for GCMC and MBM news services*

Professor honored for science, religion course

BLUFFTON, Ohio—A Bluffton College psychology professor has been recognized for developing a new course exploring the tensions between cognitive science and religion. William Slater has received the John Templeton Foundation Science and Religion Course Program Prize for his course "The Cognitive Sciences and Religion."

"My intent is that students will find this class to be a place where they can look at issues in a critical way but also find support and, in the end, have their faith strengthened," Slater says.

The award includes $10,000 to be divided between the course's instructor and the host institution. The course is scheduled to start next spring.

Songs of peace serenade Canadian capital

OTTAWA—With bombs falling in the Balkans, 500 Mennonites gathered May 13 in front of the Canadian parliament buildings in Ottawa to hold a hymnsing for peace. Mennonite Central Committee Canada helped arrange the trip.

"We urge the government of Canada to press for an end to the bombing and for a peaceful and just resolution of this conflict," said a letter from the group sent to government leaders. "It is to this end that we direct our songs and our prayers today."

Six members of parliament came out to talk to the group.—*Canadian Mennonite*

MMA honors field representatives

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid field representatives from Indiana and Pennsylvania have been honored as MMA's Counselors of the Year. Steve Herendeen of Goshen and Lee Shertzer of Mount Joy, Pa., received the awards at MMA's national conference last month in Kansas City, Mo.

Also honored were Cameron Kaufman, Hutchinson, Kan., as Associate Counselor of the Year; Chad Hetter, Waynesboro, Va., as Fast Start Counselor of the Year; Arlin Lapp, Harleysville, Pa., as Mennonite Foundation Representative of the Year; and Brad Miller, Goshen, as Fraternal Adviser of the Year.

Sales achievement awards went to Herendeen; Wendell Hoover, Mount Joy; Norman Maust, Goshen; Gordon Schrag, Hutchinson; David A. Martin, Goshen; Leo Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va.; and Marvin Holck, North Newton, Kan.—*MMA News Service*

Refugee story one of success

WINNIPEG—When Kanga Kalisa graduated last month from prestigious Queens University in Kingston, Ont., he had one proud guest from Brandon, Man., in the audience. Nine years after Anna Schroeder and her husband, Al, helped sponsor the young man from Uganda to come to Canada, she made the trip to see Kalisa receive his law degree.

Ethnic conflict forced Kalisa's family to flee from Rwanda to Uganda, where he was born. When he was 11, Kalisa lost his left hand to a grenade. Lacking citizenship and with a disability, Kalisa had limited employment opportunities in Uganda.

So with the help of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, a sponsorship connection was made between Kalisa and Grace Mennonite Church in Brandon. He arrived in 1990 at the age of 19 and stayed with the Schroeders for 18 months.—*MCC Canada News Service*

Peace program draws 168 to EMU campus

HARRISONBURG, Va.—They have come from Sudan, Palestine, India, Bangladesh, Ukraine and East Timor, each with a personal story in the hopeful quest for peace in a violent world.

Eastern Mennonite University's annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute is expected to draw 168 people from 53 countries to the school's Harrisonburg, Va., campus. Five sessions will be held between May 10 and July 2.

"To build peace, a culture must be willing to reach down into their traditions and search for a path that's different," director Vernon E. Jantzi said in his opening address.

by the way ...

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., is one of seven U.S. schools to qualify students every year since 1978 for the American Forensics Association national tournament.

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Births

Allen, Madilynn Rose, May 14, to Annastasia (Stucky) and Joseph Allen, Hutchinson, Kan.

Bartel, Garrett Benson, May 4, to Chris and Shelly (Ashcraft) Bartel, Buhler, Kan.

Bellar, Sabrina Grace, May 16, to Amy (Koehn) and Chris Bellar, Conway Springs, Kan.

Dunkle, Brendan Mead, May 21, to Kenneth and Sharon (Siegrist) Dunkle, Zionsville, Pa.

Ervin, Allison Diane, May 22, to Glenda (Lehman) and Scott Ervin, Dalton, Ohio.

Gonyer, Margaret Grace, May 9, to Karen (Speigle) and Kenneth Gonyer, Broadway, Va.

Keller, Kristopher Patrick, May 20, to Joe and Patti (Troyer) Keller, Middlebury, Ind.

Knechel, Titus Jeremiah and Trevor Joshua (twins), May 20, to Darryl and Stacey (Scheffer) Knechel, Harleysville, Pa.

Myers, Bryce Thomas, May 9, to Justine (Leonard) and Tom Myers, Boyertown, Pa.

Pirrung, Emma Kristine, May 14, to Ed and Kristine (Beiler) Pirrung, Lancaster, Pa.

Swartzentruber, Miriam Louise, May 21, to Maureen and Ron Swartzentruber, Amesburg, Mass.

Waidelich, Christian Dean, May 26, to Gary and Mary (Nagal) Waidelich, Archbold, Ohio.

Marriages

Binford/Godshall: Michelle Binford, Poquoson, Va., and Allen Godshall, Newport News, Va., May 22 at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Hampton, Va.

Imhoff/Knepp: Michelle Imhoff, Eureka, Ill., and Matt Knepp, Eureka, May 15 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Miller/Swartzendruber: William Harley Miller, Kalona, Iowa, and Emily Joe Swartzendruber, Shickley, Neb., May 22 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Miller/Yoder: Ann Miller, Middlebury, Ind., and Herbert Yoder, Goshen, Ind., April 24 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Robinson/Walker: Jack Robinson, Hutchinson, Kan., and Carrie Walker, Hutchinson, May 22 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Schmucker/Troyer: Ray Schmucker, Colon, Mich., and Ann Troyer, Middlebury, Ind., April 24 at Middlebury (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.

Deaths

Augustine, Mary, 85, Archbold, Ohio, died May 11. Parents: Simon and Minerva Rychener Augustine (deceased). Funeral: May 14 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Brubacher, John, 74, Burr Oak, Mich., died May 14 of cancer. Spouse: Doris Hostetler Brubacher. Parents: William and Anne Weaver Brubacher (deceased). Other survivors: children Janet, Judy Holbrook, Joyce McManus, Jill Hescott, Kristine Pratt, Carol Armstrong, John, Jim; 16 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak.

Kraemer, Edna Brubacher, 65, Cambridge, Ont., died May 14. Spouse: Levi Kraemer (deceased). Survivors: children Bruce, Ruby, Dorothy Freymond, Karen Wilde, Kevin; eight grandchildren. Funeral: May 15 at Hawkesville (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Layman, Nina Elizabeth Heatwole, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 7. Spouse: Clement Layman (deceased). Parents: Amos and Sallie Johnson Heatwole (deceased). Survivors: children Wilbur, Ruth Yost; foster son Charles Comer; 13 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 10 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Lippert, Harlan, 91, Lyndon, Kan., died May 21. Spouse: Bertha Lippert. Parents: Robert and Bessie Lippert (deceased). Other survivors: children Ken, Ray; two grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at Lyndon.

Martin, Bertha Viola, 105, Waynesboro, Va., died May 23. Parents: Daniel and Savilla Driver Martin (deceased). Funeral: May 26 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

Oswald, Velma Edith, 86, Millersburg, Ohio, died May 17. Spouse: Corliss Oswald (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Rhoda May Brubaker (deceased). Survivors: daughter Barbara Crider; one grandchild. Funeral: May 20 at Millersburg (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Vansickle, Revae Rudicel, 85, Burrton, Kan., died May 12. Spouse: Cecil Vansickle. Parents: Charley and Allie Davis Rudicel (deceased). Other survivors: children Gerald, Laquita Boyd; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

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  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

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by Gordon Houser

Star Wars mania has struck, and perhaps we can learn from it rather than simply letting ourselves be swept along with the tide. You can hardly avoid the ubiquitous reminders of *The Phantom Menace*.

Images of characters from the movie appear on billboards for Pepsi, on towels, backpacks and numerous other items in stores. Newspapers and magazines have devoted much space to discussing first the anticipation of the movie, as thousands waited in line to purchase advance tickets, then to the movie itself.

We're witnessing the power of mass marketing to enslave millions to thinking and talking about a movie that is not worth mentioning except for the mania surrounding it.

For the few who don't know, *The Phantom Menace* is the first episode of a projected nine-part cycle of movies by writer/ director/producer George Lucas. Episodes 4-6 appeared in 1977, 1980 and 1983 and won millions of ardent fans. Now, after 16 years, the first episode of the prequel trilogy has appeared, and old fans as well as a new generation of moviegoers have been chomping at the bit to see this movie.

While the earlier trilogy was mostly fresh and creative, this new episode is a flop. The technology has improved, but that matters little. The earlier movies had characters with some depth, and the stories had suspense. This new one has neither. Narratively, nothing really happens that we didn't see in an earlier Star Wars movie. The only halfway suspenseful part is a pod race, and even there the outcome is never in doubt.

The movie wastes the talents of good actors such as Liam Neeson, Ewan McGregor, Samuel L. Jackson and Natalie Portman. Their lines are so dull, even silly, and their actions so wooden and controlled, that they must feel embarrassed by being in the film (though no doubt consoled by the millions of dollars they'll make). As for Jake Lloyd, the boy who plays Anakin Skywalker (who will later grow up to become Darth Vader), there must be other child actors out there who can act.

As our children—and many of us—flock to see this movie, what is it teaching us? You may protest that it's only entertainment. Yet whatever we encounter in our mediaculture has some effect on us. The purpose of this column is to remind us and help us to think about what we're absorbing so that its effect on us might at least be tempered.

The Phantom Menace tells us (surprise!) that we must fight our enemies and that good can only come through such violence. The characters mock one leader for his insistence on negotiation. After seeing this movie with their friends and cheering on the Jedi and the inhabitants of Naboo against the Dark Lord, our children will go to Sunday school (I hope) and hear about Jesus' call to love our enemies, to pray for those who persecute us. What do we do about that?

Menace continues the superficial philosophizing about "the Force," yet the movie gives contradictory messages. Qui-Gon Jinn says, "Feel. Don't think." Act on instinct. But, as Anthony Lane writes in his *New Yorker* review, "There has never been a less instinctive movie. … Its calculation glitters in every frame." The movie preaches against technology, yet it employs the latest computer technology. The vast majority of the characters in this one are computer-generated. Soon Lucas will be able to make a movie with no human actors.

Movies like this can also affect the political imagination. Lane writes in *The New Yorker*: "It is only since *Star Wars*, after all, a work that displays the casual annihilation of planets but not a single drop of blood, that America has discovered its alarming and wholly impractical taste for the deathless war—a war in which, if we must have dying, it should always happen to the other side."

Lucas first made his *Star Wars* movies to harken back to the serials in the 1930s, when it was crystal clear who were the good guys and the bad guys. Yet the most interesting film of the triology was *The Empire Strikes Back*, which included some ambiguity about one of the characters, and good and evil were mixed.

This nostalgia is one ingredient of postmodernism, according to Craig Van Gelder in *Confident Witness—Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America* (Eerdmans, 1999, $24). He argues that "the medium of movies provides a powerful tool for both analyzing the culture and for finding points of contact."

We cannot ignore the fact that many of us, and many more of our children, are seeing movies. We need to help them and ourselves think about such movies and how they may be influencing all of us.

I see some hope. I talked with a couple of 16-year-olds who found *The Phantom Menace* "kind of boring." That shows some thoughtfulness. We'll all need that against such a powerful marketing force as we've seen with this movie. May that force not be with you.

films

Central Station (R, though I don't know why) is a Brazilian film about a woman who makes her living writing letters for illiterate travelers. She meets a young boy who loses his mother and is searching for his absent father. Their touching, though never sentimental, relationship develops as they travel together, argue and grow in unexpected love. A gem.

A Midsummer Night's Dream (PG-13) is a disappointment. The film somehow makes Shakespeare's wonderful play boring. Kevin Kline's manic acting and the funny play-within-a-play at the end almost save it, but not quite.

books

St. Paul Returns to the Movies: Triumph over Shame by Robert Jewett (Eerdmans, 1999, $14) is a sequel to Jewett's earlier *St. Paul at the Movies* (John Knox, 1993). This remarkable book combines incisive biblical study with analysis of 10 films. After a chapter on the relation of honor, shame and grace in Paul's writings, Jewett explores these themes as they are depicted in these films: *The Prince of Tides*, *Babette's Feast*, *Forrest Gump*, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, *Groundhog Day*, *Babe*, *Edge of the City*, *The Firm*, *Unforgiven* and *The Shawshank Redemption*. Jewett, a New Testament scholar, offers rich insights into both Paul's thought and modern culture. I highly recommend this book.

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Rich Preheim

Similarities and silver linings

When the weather turns gray, the thunder cracks, the lightning crashes and the rain pounds down—that seems to be an ideal time to settle down with a good book as a way to seek refuge from the storm. So with the clouds of ethnic conflict and foreign military intervention still heavy over the Balkans—despite forecasts of possible clearing—here are a couple of titles to consider: *Jimshoes in Vietnam* by James R. Klassen (Herald Press, 1986) and *Reaching the Other Side* by Earl S. Martin (Crown, 1978).

They are striking reminders that even the dangerous clouds of war can have silver linings: opportunities to point the way to the God of peace, love and reconciliation.

The books—both unfortunately out of print—recount Klassen's and Martin's Vietnam War experiences as two of four Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers who stayed in the country after the fall of Saigon. Klassen and Martin are examples to us because they took Christ as their example. Both U.S. citizens, Klassen and Martin took great efforts during the war to demonstrate their allegiance to a higher cause than national interests and political ideologies, to show that they were "a different kind of American," Martin says. That meant remaining in the country as a witness to love and service in Vietnam even after the "enemy" had won and virtually every other American, including church workers, had fled.

As inspiring as these stories are, they are even more disturbing because they remind us what may be required of us.

"Christians recognize an integrity in the life of Jesus," Klassen writes. "Unless the lives of Christians also reflect integrity, the words that Christians speak ring as hollow as government propaganda."

Klassen's and Martin's books are inspiring, exciting accounts of pursuing faithful discipleship amid the world's horror and madness. *Jimshoes in Vietnam* covers Klassen's 3½ years in the country, based primarily in Saigon. In *Reaching the Other Side,* Martin focuses on the last days of the war as he and fellow MCC worker Yoshihiro Ichikawa witnessed the North Vietnamese military's march some 500 miles south to Saigon and the end of the war.

Like Vietnam, the tragedy in the Balkans calls our integrity into account. In fact, pundits and politicos have been predicting that the Balkans may be another Vietnam for the United States—a military quagmire that will be difficult to exit. That would make the current conflict even more regrettable. There would be more loss of life, more destruction of property, more waste of resources.

But Klassen and Martin and their co-workers showed that such an environmnent of death is an opportunity to proclaim the God of life in word and deed. Another Vietnam, whether in Kosovo or any other hotspot in the world, demands such a response from believers.

And such a response demands courage and conviction. In Vietnam, those faith-based attributes were exhibited by Mennonite mission and service workers in the face of unnerving uncertainty and great personal risk. They helped care for war victims, led Bible studies and gave leadership to the fledgling Vietnamese Mennonite church. They helped foster love and understanding among parties caught in hate and confusion.

But the workers' experiences also included detentions and interrogations. They were suspected as CIA by one side and as communist by the other. They had to endure shelling and gunfire. One MCC worker, Daniel Gerber, even lost his life; he was abducted in 1962 and never heard from again.

Consequently, as inspiring as these stories are, they are even more disturbing because they graphically remind us what may be required of us if we truly love mercy, want to do justice, desire to beat swords into plowshares.

Of course, the world has not stayed the same in the quarter century since Vietnam. In fact, those changes may have made it more difficult to live and preach peace and justice. The draft and battlefield news coverage made Vietnam almost impossible to ignore. Today, however, no young men are worrying about their draft numbers, and media reports don't seem to shock our sensibilities anymore.

But the God of James Klassen and Earl Martin remains constant.—*rp*

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Enemy infiltration

The Lord used the June 1 editorial ("What to Do With the Enemy We Need") to synthesize several scattered thoughts about the need most Christians have for enemies. In addition to defining who we are, enemies provide strong motivation to work and fight hard to win competitive situations and games, including war. The creation of an enemy justifies throwing all my resources into eliminating the person or thing that hates me and is trying hard to conquer me or my group, whether it be a sports club, church or nation.

My fractured thoughts about spiritual warfare were clarified into a positive idea through the editorial statement, "And how we are tempted to blame others for our poor showing as God's children rather than our own selfishness and lackadaisical attitude." The current craze to spend so much of our energy and prayer resources doing spiritual warfare against Satan as if he were the cause of our lukewarm churches and Christian institutions is now understandable to me. We have made fighting our ancient foes more important than loving one another as Christ the Conqueror has loved us.—*Paul Sangree, Washington Boro, Pa.*

The June 1 editorial says Paul took Jesus' ethic —love and pray for your enemies—a step further by telling us to feed our enemies when they are hungry and give them a drink when they are thirsty. (Romans 12:20). It's worth remembering, however, that Paul was simply quoting from the Old Testament book of Proverbs 25:21. In spite of the holy wars and bloody battles that appear in the Old Testament, you can also find the roots of the Christian ethic if you look carefully enough. One of my favorite examples is God's love for the repentant Ninevites, which disgusted Jonah, although there are plenty of other examples. —*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

That was the best editorial J. Lorne Peachey has written yet. Maybe it was just the best one for me. I kept reading it, and at every paragraph I wanted to say, "Amen and amen." The editorial captured the essence of my thinking on the subject, and to see it so succinctly put into words was like a window opened in my mind. Sometimes it feels to me like I have more great moments of revelation of God speaking to me. That editorial was one of those moments. Thanks.—*Freda Zehr, Wilmington, Del.*

Improvable instruments

I commend the first four paragraphs of the article on "Confessions of Faith" in *Mennonite Encyclopedia I*, pp. 679-680, for those wondering if Mennonites believe confessions are guidelines or doctrine ("Debate Over Membership Raises Questions About Confession of Faith Understandings," May 25). J.C. Wenger and Harold S. Bender, no liberals they, state clearly that Anabaptists saw confessions "not as instruments to which the laity or ministry subscribed, ... but as instructional tools for the indoctrination of their young people and as witnesses to their faith for distribution in society or as a means of better understanding between differing groups." Wenger and Bender also approvingly quoted Dutch Mennonite leader Hans die Ries (1553-1638) that we are not bound by confessions of faith because they are always subject to improvement.

This article is also available in the *Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, www.mhsc.ca, in the "Confessions, Doctrinal" page.—*Sam Steiner, Waterloo, Ont.*

In memoriam

What a shock were John and Dottie Freed's deaths ("Pastor, Wife Killed in Ohio Traffic Accident," May 25). This is a true loss. Elaine, my wife, and I got to know John and Dottie in Eastern District Conference. I remember him as cheerful and resourceful. He was also willing to tackle tasks that could easily discourage a man.

At a pastor retreat about 20 years ago, the pastors and wives sat in a big circle; each person in turn was to recount a truth that would be their counsel to a hypothetical rookie pastor. John's counsel has stayed with me, and as near as I can recall, here it is: "The great Bible teacher G. Campbell Morgan once said that every road in England, if you followed it long enough, would lead you to London and that every part of the Bible will lead you to Christ. I encourage the young preacher to preach the Bible so every text leads the hearers to Christ."

We count it a privilege to have known John and Dottie Freed.—*Monty and Elaine Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Divine unity and perfect unions

How are the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church going to come into divine unity? Is not the Holy Spirit concerned that we do not lose the first love for the lost sinner, the love of Christ that accepts the

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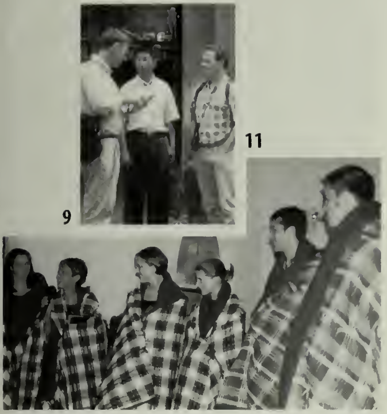

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readers say

sinner as he is and then tells him, "Come, follow me; I'll free you"? We have such a warning to the churches in Revelation.

Is not the Holy Spirit also deeply concerned that we do not allow things in church which lead to not hearing what the Spirit says unto the churches? Is not divine unity going to come through the Holy Spirit, how well we learn to obey that Word upon which divine unity is dependent? So let's pray that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us on that Word and empower us to live by it.—*Willard Becker, Freeman, S.D.*

Politicians tend to hyperbole. The authors of the corpus of the U.S. Constitution got carried away when they wrote about a "more perfect union." No such animal exists. If a union can be said to be perfect, that says it all. There are no degrees of perfect. However, when contemplating even a more perfect union, it is well to remember the old story about the woman who spent her whole life looking for the perfect man. When she finally found him, she then sadly understood she had wasted her life searching because, alas, he was looking for the perfect woman. Integration of General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church would no doubt go smoother and faster if everyone looked to the Christ of Isaiah 53, particularly Isaiah 53:6.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

Fear and faith

The May 25 editorial ("Fear Not!") sure hit the nail on the head. Why do Mennonites not have more faith in God? 1 Corinthians 1:9 says God is faithful. The next verse says, "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought."—*Herbert E. Zook, New Castle, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Ethnicit and North American Mennonites

by Steven Nolt

Among the most striking images in the Book of Revelation are scenes in which God gathers people "from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 13:7; 14:6). These pictures portray God's sovereignty and universal love extending to all the human family's ethnic groups. In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit begins drawing many different people into the church, and the images in Revelation suggest that the church's multiethnic character is recognizable into eternity.

Ethnicity has been an important part of the church's life and witness. Authentic Christianity is never a set of disembodied doctrines. Rather, it is faith woven into and expressed through real-life contexts and cultures—the everyday stuff of ethnic identity.

Most basically, ethnicity is a shared and accepted sense of peoplehood. Such a sense can stem from many roots: a common language, ancestral homeland, folkways, physical characteristics or some other aspect of human experience. In North America, the interaction of different ethnicities has also shaped ideas about peoplehood. Swedish immigrants, for example, thought about what it meant to be Swedish in a whole new way after they left communities where everyone unselfconsciously shared a common culture and they entered a new society where neighbors were unfamiliar with their customs and habits. Similarly, African-American identity stems as much from the history and reality of life in the Western Hemisphere as it does from a heritage of Africa.

Authentic Christianity is never a set of disembodied doctrines. Rather, it is faith woven into and expressed through real-life contexts and cultures—the everyday stuff of ethnic identity.

Mention ethnicity in Mennonite circles and you're likely to hear comments about borscht, four-part singing or particular clothing styles. While foods and folkways are important ethnic markers and often represent deeper values than their practitioners realize, they are hardly the sum of ethnicity. Ethnic identity has more to do with culture—the learned patterns of behavior, mental habits and collective social assumptions of a people. We feel at home in an ethnic group because the culture is familiar. We aren't caught off guard by what happens, what is said or what is left unsaid.

The process of integrating the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) has raised the subject of ethnicity, identity and culture in a new way. Rubbing shoulders with people who claim the same faith but who express it in sometimes unfamiliar ways reminds us again of how ethnicity shapes our practice and how unconscious our own ethnic assumptions often are.

Discussing ethnicity and drawing comparisons would be a lot easier if, say, MCs and GCs were each a single ethnic group in themselves. But, in fact, these bodies include different ethnicities within their memberships. For example, the GC denomination in the United States includes major groups of Russian Mennonites, Pennsylvania Germans, Midwestern Swiss Mennonites and Amish Mennonites—not to mention members from Native, African-American, Asian and Hispanic cultures.

Understanding ethnicity and its role in our denominational culture can be a complex task, but we can begin by looking at a few historically significant experiences of Mennonite peoplehood and note the ways in which ethnicity affected expressions of faith.

Pennsylvania German Mennonite peoplehood: The Mennonites who came to America in the 1700s were one small part of a much larger group of German-speaking Protestants who settled in eastern and central Pennsylvania, western Maryland and Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. They intermarried, developed their own "Pennsylvania Dutch" dialect and shared a common identity marked by customs, attitudes and opinions. For example, their culture valued regional autonomy and resisted organizational bureaucracy. Pennsylvania German Mennonites joined their Lutheran and Reformed ethnic neighbors in praising virtues of humility and plainness and resisting more distant denominational efforts to promote organized mission work, church periodicals or higher education. Within their Pennsylvania German ethnic world, Mennonites comfortably participated in local civic life and even regional politics. Their sense of peoplehood was larger than the Mennonite community itself, but it could still render them a people apart since the larger society generally regarded Pennsylvania German culture as provincial, even backward.

Russian Mennonites of the Plains: A different experience characterized the "Russian Mennonites" who arrived in the United States after 1874. In Russia they had lived in distinct, geographically defined colonies. Within these colonies they established their own schools, village administration and had considerable freedom to manage their own affairs. Surrounded by Russian Orthodox, Cossack and Nogai neighbors, Mennonites imported books, music, religious literature and intellectual ideas from German-speaking Europe. Their sense of peoplehood emphasized the importance of the local village congregation and also valued German high culture. Most Russian Mennonites who came to the Plains states carried these sensibilities with them. They championed congregationalism, promoted the arts and typically saw education as a source of, rather than a threat to, faithfulness. Their ethnicity did not keep them from sampling and engaging many expressions of larger culture, but it channeled those expressions in the context of the church community.

Midwestern progressive Amish Mennonite ethnicity: During the 19th century, most Amish Mennonites in the Midwest rejected the conservative Old Order Amish movement. Instead, they carried their denominational tradition down a different path, creating another version of being faithful in the world but not of it. From their Amish heritage they had a strong sense that the church was somehow to be notably separate from the rest of society. At the same time their progressive instincts pushed them to define peoplehood in new ways—for example, by establishing and vigorously supporting denominational institutions or championing an "Anabaptist vision" ideology that marked group boundaries apart from clothing styles or customs tied too closely to German folkways. Ethnicity rooted in this tradition sought to express creatively distinct beliefs and countercultural ideals, even if at times they ended up embodied in institutions and programs that seemed strikingly conventional and American.

"Russlaender" Mennonites in Canada: During the 1920s, some 20,000 Mennonite refugees from the Soviet Union arrived in Canada. They received the nickname "Russlaenders," and many affiliated with CMC, playing a major role in the 20th-century development of that group. The once-wealthy Russlaenders had lost everything in the horrors of the Russian Revolution and subsequent civil war and anarchy. Those experiences left a major impression on them and shaped their thinking about the church and society. The shocking encounter with violence and death, for example, produced a deeply pietistic spirituality among many Russlaender Mennonites. Although they clung to the German language, they were in other ways eager to join Canadian society and re-establish the financial security and cultural sophistication they had once known. As successful entrepreneurs and professionals, they led the Mennonite migration to cities such as Winnipeg and created a new Mennonite urban identity.

Especially in recent decades, many other ethnic groups have joined those sketched here. The North American Mennonite community includes increasing numbers of Native, African-American, Hispanic, Asian and other European-rooted ethnic Mennonites. Each has found ways to blend faith and culture, identity and discipleship into expressions of authentic Mennonitism. In their often self-conscious embrace of ethnic identity, these folk remind other Mennonites of the need to acknowledge the cultural context in which belief takes shape. Faith is never formed in a vacuum. Understanding those contexts and identities will help us not only with the immediate task of integration but also with larger matters of mission and the cultural integrity of our witness—hastening the day when the image of Revelation is a reality in our midst.

Faith is never formed in a vacuum. Understanding our contexts and identities will help us not only with the immediate task of integration but also with larger matters of mission and the cultural integrity of our witness.

Steven Nolt is a historian in South Bend, Ind.

It is interesting to note the different way the word "ethnic" is used in Mennonite circles compared with its use in the Church of the Brethren. One hears the term "ethnic Mennonite" applied to people with Germanic surnames and certain genealogical ties while, for example, African-American or Polish-American members claim to be "non-ethnic Mennonites." Among the Brethren, however, the reverse is the case. "Ethnic Brethren" are Hispanic, Korean-American, or other under-represented church members—not descendants of old-line German Dunker families.—*Steve Nolt*

Christian propriety and th

by Perry Bush

On the same weekend that our nation celebrates itself with fireworks, Mennonite churches across the country have designated this July 4 as Peace Sunday. Talking in church about peace when the rest of the nation engages in patriotic hoopla feels improper. Yet speaking to the ways of peace on national celebrations like Memorial Day and the Fourth of July seems wonderfully appropriate. Outside Aug. 6, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, there could be no better time for U.S. Mennonites to have Peace Sunday than during the Fourth of July weekend. How do we Mennonites feel about our citizenship in the two kingdoms we inhabit?

None of us have parachuted in from Mars; most of us have been raised to be good Americans. It hurts not to be able to join fully in the national celebrations.

An oration by the great African-American leader Frederick Douglass encapsulates our discomfort. In 1852, Douglass was a recently escaped slave but already gaining the reputation of a brilliant orator, and citizens in the abolitionist hotbed of Rochester, N.Y., asked him to preach a sermon on July 4. His sermon—"What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"—began by acknowledging much of the good in our country. He laid out his respect and admiration, as perhaps we should once again articulate ours, for the founders of the republic.

Douglass went on to articulate the awkwardness he felt at being asked to speak on that day of all days. Because Frederick Douglass was an escaped slave, he knew that all those fine words in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were never meant to apply to him.

My kids and I love fireworks. We go to see them every chance we get. And we like picnics and barbecues and parades. But when we Mennonites partake in these festivities around the Fourth of July, we feel a bit like Douglass felt, like we're onlookers at someone else's party. We don't feel at home.

What held Douglass back from full participation in the festivities was the color of his skin. What holds us back is our commitment to the ways of peace.

Modern, total war: Several hundred years from now, historians may call this the century of modern, total war. They may not make the distinctions, so important today, between the two world wars and the Cold War; they'll lump all these wars together, one of them giving way to—giving birth to—the next, like three successive, obscene acts in one terrible, vicious, bloody play.

Historians identify four major historical factors that helped give rise to modern, total war—warfare leveled without restraint or mercy:

- the rise of the modern nation-state as the new, hierarchically organized, bureaucratically managed agent that makes war;
- the vast increase in the populations of these nation-states, making possible new mass armies;
- the rise of commercial and then industrial capitalism, creating the technological capacity to clothe and equip these armies;
- and, finally, the rise of nationalistic ideologies that helped to rationalize this new warfare.

The world has witnessed the rise of new states directing and managing the war effort; new mass armies, equipped with all the horrifying weapons of mass destruction that the creativity of industrial capitalism can produce, and soldiers and citizens alike extremely motivated to fight for total victory by new ideological means of persuasion. In such a situation of mass, industrial warfare, what's the crucial ingredient this is needed now for victory? What's the fundamental necessary precondition required?

Victory will emerge from the degree that the warmaking state is able to mobilize its resources to fight and the extent of those resources. Modern wars have become "gross national product wars," such as the two world wars, in which, in historian Russell Weigley's words, "the contest did largely turn upon the question of which rival coalition of powers could outproduce the other."

This series of developments has had a horrifying impact on the way warfare has come to be conducted. If the enemy nation involves its entire population in the war effort, a mobilization that has become key to its chances of ultimate victory, then enemy civilians appear just as much a legitimate target for attack and destruction as enemy soldiers. If the warmaking nation can so terrify the mass of enemy civilians, perhaps the enemy nation will surrender without having to defeat all their soldiers. And thus the path has been laid that proceeded from the German submarine blockade of England to the Blitz of London to the firebombing of Japan to the Christmas bombing of Hanoi to the Highway of Death in the Persian Gulf. Through these developments in this century,

4th of July

civilians have been transformed into direct, deliberate targets for destruction. Put another way, genocide has become a legitimate practice in modern war.

As citizens of such a state who are still committed to the ways of peace, such developments give us great pause—even at times, such as now, when this genocide remains only a theoretical possibility. Such a prospect leaves us with an uneasy feeling, particularly on days of national celebration. We don't feel at home with the patriotism; we don't sense that we can join in the national festivities wholeheartedly. We have this commitment to the ways of peace that leaves us feeling left out.

And it hurts. None of us have parachuted in from Mars; most of us have been raised to be good Americans. It hurts not to be able to join in fully.

We feel improper talking about peace on the Fourth of July, but it feels more than appropriate. This sense of legitimacy may come from a number of things, but it can be traced to a different kind of historical trajectory for Mennonites.

Rural isolation: In other centuries, isolated away in small rural communities, people like Mennonites might have remained immune from the larger historical developments of their society. Yet given the massive social changes that have engulfed us, the rapid pace of acculturation, our rural isolation has been shattered in this century. Through our participation in institutions like Civilian Public Service, the 1-W program, Mennonite Disaster Service or voluntary service, we have come face to face with needs and injustices that were no longer outside the boundaries of our small rural communities.

We responded with tremendous energy; engaging in such sacrificial service began to be seen as central in an emerging identity of what it means to be Mennonite. Moreover, we began to readjust our theology to speak to the state about the causes of such injustice. No longer could we rationalize our silence because of our dedication to a two-kingdom theology; no longer could we remain silent about injustice because we thought we had no right to tell the state what to do. Instead we rethought the very meaning of the lordship of Christ. Christ is Lord over all, even the state, we reasoned; and God thus relies on Christians to communicate God's expectations for the state's behavior.

Mennonites have entered national society, and with that entrance has come a new willingness to speak to the state about justice and peace—even and perhaps especially during times of national celebration. So we have Peace Sunday on the Fourth of July weekend, and it is proper to do so.

There's a tremendous amount of healthy and needed dialogue occurring in Mennonite churches today. We are involved in piecing together two large chunks of the church, and it's important that we talk that through. We are tackling controversies about whether gay people or military members can fully participate in our congregations, and we must discuss such issues thoroughly.

Yet I'm concerned that we talk too much with ourselves and not enough with others and to our government about its conduct in the world. In this century, modern nation-states have come to accept genocide as a legitimate practice in warfare. At the same time, people of peace have been more fully integrated into our societies than ever before and have sharpened the tone and content of our advocacy to the state. We need to speak more loudly than before.

This could mean a change in how we conduct Peace Sunday. Perhaps we should consider changing the geography of worship. Maybe we should periodically relocate our worship service, for instance, to the gates of an air base or military facility; they exist within driving distance of every Mennonite church in the country. In such places we could more publicly proclaim the implications of the lordship of Christ. In such places we could more effectively say to the state that it is not the state but Christ who is Lord.

If we were to do this, we'd be making fools of ourselves in the eyes of many people. It would be uncomfortable for us to engage in this kind of public behavior. It would feel provocative, improper. We may be Mennonites, but we want to be good citizens; it's hard enough feeling left out on days of national celebration without engaging in conduct that accentuates our peculiarity.

But maybe proper Christian behavior sometimes demands a little public impropriety, regardless of how it makes us feel. Maybe proper Christian behavior requires a degree of public foolishness, like proclaiming a gospel of peace on the Fourth of July.

Perhaps we should consider changing the geography of worship. Maybe we should periodically relocate our worship service, for instance, to the gates of an air base or military facility.

Perry Bush teaches history at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

The old college try: Educators search for solutions to differences in GC, MC styles of school governance

U.S. Mennonite college campuses were to be some of the biggest battlegrounds in integration, according to expectations. After all, school governance is radically different between the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC)—and each side has felt passionately about its own system.

The expectations have been wrong so far. While they have not produced unanimity on how to fit the five colleges into one church structure, discussions have been marked by a willingness to explore options, not by the acrimonious turf wars some had feared.

"We have gotten some satisfaction disproving that," says Lee Snyder, president of Bluffton (Ohio) College.

The reason for the positive feelings, she says, is that building relationships among participants has been "the centerpiece of this effort." And that has produced new understandings of the other group's system.

"We're getting to know each other," says Orville Yoder, president of Mennonite Board of Education (MBE). "We're no longer two groups with perceived different ideologies. ... We do have a lot of the same ideas and instincts."

The MC schools—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Va., Goshen (Ind.) College and Hesston (Kan.) College—are owned by the Mennonite Church. MBE, the MC education agency, appoints the schools' board members, approves new majors and sets policies such as the percentage of Mennonite students the schools should have enrolled.

Meanwhile, the U.S. GC colleges—Bluffton and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.—are private corporations affiliated with the church and responsible for their own decisions.

The GC perception was that the MC system was authoritarian and with an added layer of bureaucracy. Because the General Conference Mennonite Church lacks an MBE-like structure, MC folks tended to see the GC colleges as also lacking church accountability and commitment.

GC educators now see the value of some MBE services, such as training new board members, compiling data on student trends and advocating for Mennonite higher education in the church. "I think the General Conference [colleges] have come to appreciate very much the MBE role," says Bethel president Doug Penner.

Meanwhile, one MC college president would like to have some of the freedom that the GC colleges have had. EMU's Joseph Lapp questions why MBE has to sign off on a capital campaign or new majors once they have already been approved by the college's board, which is appointed by MBE. "They need to trust the people they appoint and not feel the need to second-guess," he says.

Snyder, a longtime EMU professor and administrator before becoming Bluffton's president in 1996, says she has come to appreciate the GC colleges' grass-roots connections to the people in the pews. "There isn't a superboard, but there are different ways of accountability to the congregations," she says.

With this recognition of the strengths of both systems comes the challenge of incorporating them into one new system. Although the plan is still a work in process, the Education Integration Committee (EIC) is considering allowing each college to have a different relationship to a Mennonite educational agency.

"And the relationship at a minimum is a consultation relationship," says EIC chair Ed Diller, who is also chair of the Bluffton board.

That means the new agency would have input on certain matters. Or colleges could choose to have more governance, similar to the current MBE model.

Penner calls the idea "the only sensible way to move." He and Snyder don't envision their schools being owned by the new church.

But their MC counterparts worry that the differences in relationships may place some colleges in better positions than others. "I hope that we will create a model that emphasizes our commonalities and, to the extent possible, relates all of us to a united church in equal ways," says Goshen president Shirley H. Showalter.

Hesston president Loren Swartzendruber wonders what the effect will be if some colleges don't have to have a minimum number of Mennonite students while his school would. "It really does handicap me somewhat if I have to maintain a certain percentage," he says (see story at left).

As is now being considered, the proposed denominational educational agency would encompass colleges, elementary and secondary schools and pastoral and theological education, including seminaries and conference-based and distance-learning programs.—*Rich Preheim*

Could money level schools' playing field?

The idea that the U.S. Mennonite colleges could have differing relationships with an integrated educational agency has created concerns that it could produce unfair advantages for some schools.

Dale Schrag, secretary for the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council, says money could compensate for the differing relationships. The educational agency would be funded by both its institutions and the church at large. Schrag suggests that colleges wanting more agency governance contribute less to the agency budget than those wanting less agency governance.

"The more the church, through the agency, controls a given school, the more the church would pay to fund the agency," Schrag says. "Conversely, the more autonomy a given school has in its relationship with the agency, the more that school would be expected to carry a larger portion of the agency's budget."—*Rich Preheim*

CEE connected worker with Mennonitism

Now Chinese 'evangelist' wants to study at AMBS

BEIJING—When Yin Hong Tao first encountered Anabaptism, he says he didn't discover anything new. Rather, he saw that it was similar to the faith of his grandfather, a Brethren bishop.

"These weren't all new thoughts or a new philosophy," Yin says. "In my heart, I knew this is what I believe."

Starting this fall, he hopes to be studying those beliefs at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., through China Educational Exchange (CEE), a Mennonite exchange program. AMBS has already issued the invitation, and his funding is in place.

But Yin worries that tensions between the U.S. and Chinese governments may hurt his chances for a passport. He was also recently married, and a trip to the United States would have to be made without his wife.

"I want to go to AMBS," Yin says. "But in many ways, the chances remain outside my control. If God wants me to study abroad, then someday I will go."

Yin, a fifth-generation Christian, is an "evangelist"—the term used in the official Chinese church to designate ministers who are not ordained—at Chongwenmen, a large, formerly Methodist congregation in Beijing.

Religion was outlawed in China after the communist government takeover in 1949, and the church went underground. The ban was lifted in 1979, and churches began to reopen the following year. But denominationalism is no longer allowed, and the registered congregations, such as Chongwenmen, are part of the official Three-Self movement: self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating.

Yin connected with Mennonites several years ago when he met Todd Friesen, the former co-coordinator of CEE, who lived in Beijing and occasionally attended the Chongwenmen church.

"Todd was impressed with Yin's quality of character and thought he might be a good candidate to study at [AMBS]," says current CEE co-coordinator Rod Suderman.

CEE, a program of five North American Mennonite organizations, sends workers to teach English in Chinese universities and technical institutes and to support Chinese Christians with their presence. In addition, CEE sends Chinese educators to study and teach at North American Mennonite schools.

Mennonite groups participating in CEE are the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Central Committee, Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Mennonite Brethren's MBMS International.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and CEE news services.*

GCMC-CEE photo by Melanie Zuercher

Ron Flaming (left), executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission, visits with Yin Hong Tao and China Educational Exchange co-coordinator Rod Suderman outside the Chongwenmen church in Beijing. Yin, who is a congregational leader at Chongwenmen, hopes to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary starting this fall.

Grandson wants to give back

BEIJING—Although Guo Xu does not consider himself a Christian, he is a firm believer in what Mennonites have to offer his people. Guo, a Beijing lawyer, dreams of translating material on Anabaptism and even founding an institute for Anabaptist studies in China one day.

"There are many people in China who are interested in who the Mennonites are and what their doctrine is," he says.

Guo has known about Mennonites all his life. In fact, he believes he owes them quite a lot. His grandfather is Stephen Wang—still living at more than 90 years old—whose family was among the first converts of the Mennonite missionaries who came to China between 1911 and 1927. Wang and James Liu came to the United States in the early 1930s to study at Mennonite institutions. Wang attended Bluffton (Ohio) College for one year before graduating from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.

In typical Chinese fashion, Guo was raised by his grandparents while both his parents worked. So he has heard about Mennonites and Anabaptism from a young age. But there is more to Guo's appreciation for Mennonitism than that, says Rod Suderman, co-coordinator of China Educational Exchange.

"In his grandfather's day, the masses were largely illiterate and uneducated," Suderman says. "But Stephen Wang, with the help of the Mennonites, had the chance to get an education and pull the family up. Guo Xu believes that's why he is where he is today."

Guo is getting an introductory book on Mennonitism translated into simplified Mandarian, the official language of mainland China. The book, *Mennonite Faith and Life*, was written by Sheldon Sawatzky, former Mennonite missionary in Taiwan.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and CEE news services*

MVS controversy swirls over BMC volunteer living in Twin Cities, Minn., unit house

NEWTON, Kan.—A volunteer with the United Church of Christ living in the Twin Cities (Minn.) Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit has moved out in the wake of escalating conflict over her UCC assignment with the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC).

The Twin Cities MVS committee had allowed the worker to live in the unit's house in St. Paul since September 1998, even though the binational MVS office had never approved the arrangement because of her assignment with BMC, a Minneapolis-based organization supporting homosexuals in the church. After months of attempts to resolve the dispute, MVS headquarters in May requested the volunteer to move out.

But discussions continue between MVS, which has based its actions on denominational positions on homosexuality, and the Twin Cities unit to try to find a solution regarding BMC volunteers living in the unit house. "We're willing to see if there is any other way to come to agreement," says Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries.

MVS is a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The controversy became public at the annual binational MVS retreat held earlier this month in Missouri. A mass email from the Twin Cities MVS committee sent shortly before the retreat urged MVS participants to "voice your concern about this injustice."

We're willing to see if there is any other way to come to agreement.

—Lois Barrett

According to the MVS handbook, major decisions require the consensus of the MVS unit, the local MVS committee and the MVS office. At issue is whether parties have the authority to act on their own decisions when the consensus breaks down.

MVS was approached in late 1997 about creating a formal MVS position for a BMC staff volunteer. After much discussion, the request was denied. BMC then asked the Twin Cities MVS committee whether a non-MVS volunteer could live in the unit. The committee unanimously agreed to the idea.

MVS often allows for such "associate volunteers"—people who are not MVS volunteers but live in units that are not filled to capacity. Associate volunteers do not go through the formal MVS approval process but are expected to adhere to MVS standards.

But MVS in June 1998 denied associate volunteer status to the BMC worker. The Twin Cities committee responded with a letter saying it would not comply with the decision, and the volunteer moved into the unit house in September 1998 under the auspices of the UCC voluntary service program.

Committee members say the decision to house the BMC volunteer grew out of the two congregations' support for BMC.

"We acknowledge that not all units in MVS would be a good match for this person," the committee wrote just prior to the retreat. "But in the case of the Twin Cities unit, it could not be a better one."

But in a response to the committee, Barrett wrote: "You chose to act without that consensus by not waiting for the dialogue to be completed. By acting in this way, by having [the volunteer] move into the unit house, by not encouraging BMC to look for alternative housing for her, even though you already knew we had not given our consent, you put all of us—including [the volunteer]—in a difficult position."

At the MVS retreat, a letter was drafted asking for a re-evaluation of the agency's decision regarding the BMC volunteer and proposing a weekly prayer vigil on the issue through the conclusion of the integrated Mennonite Church's delegate sessions in 2001. The letter was signed by about 30 of the 100 retreat participants and is now being circulated through the MVS units. *—GCMC and MBM news services with Rich Preheim*

Vandals deface Chicago MVS unit

CHICAGO—The Mennonite Voluntary Service house in the Pilsen neighborhood on Chicago's west side was severely vandalized sometime between May 31 and June 2 when its four occupants were at the annual MVS retreat at Knob Noster, Mo.

The attack was discovered when one member of the household, Rita Oswald, returned to Chicago on June 2, two days early, because of the needs of her work placement. The vandalism appears not to be motivated merely by theft but rather by hostility toward the members of the MVS unit. Vulgarities were spray-painted on a wall and personal items of no monetary value were destroyed. The few items of monetary value in the house were stolen.

"This feels sort of like a personal attack," says unit member Jessica Phillips. "Before, it was … just material things. This is somebody saying something to us as people."*—Christy Risser for GCMC and MBM news services*

Ken Gingerich

Wrapped up

Salissa Schrock (second from left) thanks her congregation, First Mennonite Church of Middlebury, Ind., for the comforter she received as a 1999 high school graduate. The comforters were made by the congregation's Mennonite Women group and presented to eight graduates June 6. Other recipients included (left to right) Alayne Troyer, Jaime Ritchie, Tina Rheinheimer, Allen Rhodes and Justin Hurley.

Ministry Inquiry Program goes global

GOSHEN, Ind.—Two Goshen (Ind.) College students have expanded the borders of a Mennonite program designed for students wanting to test their calling to pastoral ministry.

Anna Kucheryavenko, from Chita, Russia, is the first non-North American to participate in the Ministry Inquiry Program, and Anne Horst from Goshen is the first program participant to serve in an overseas assignment.

Kucheryavenko, a member of the Russian Orthodox Church who graduated from Goshen last month, is serving with First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis. Horst, an incoming senior, is returning to Honduras, where she worked last summer with Goshen's Study-Service Term. She was invited back by Iglesia Menonita Evangelica in San Marcos. Horst was approved for the assignment because of her knowledge of Spanish and of the Honduran culture, says Sheldon Burkhalter, Goshen's director of church relations and the school's Ministry Inquiry Program coordinator.

Nineteen students are participating in this year's program: eight from Goshen, five from Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg, and two each from Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., Bluffton (Ohio) College and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, the Ministry Inquiry Program was started 12 years ago to allow students at U.S. and Canadian Mennonite colleges to explore pastoral ministry as a calling through 11-week internships with Mennonite congregations.

Mexico earthquake spares Mennonites

The June 15 earthquake that killed 15 in central Mexico did not affect local Mennonites, according to preliminary reports.

"But that's not a confirmed report," says Phil Bergey, coordinator for Franconia Conference, which has two workers in the region.

The quake, which registered 6.7 on the Richter scale, leveled buildings and cut power in the city of Puebla, about 75 miles southeast of Mexico City.

Puebla is home to Maranatha Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation of 60 to 70 people. Its pastor, Alberto Carpinteyro, is president of CIEAMM, the Mexican Mennonite conference.

Franconia workers Arnold and Marlene Derstine serve on Maranatha's leadership team.—*Rich Preheim*

Historians remember Mennonites in Ukraine

ZAPOROZHYE, Ukraine—The memory of Mennonites in southern Ukraine was resurrected during a May 26-30 historical conference in Zaporozhye as two memorials were dedicated in the former colony of Chortitza.

One memorial was placed on the site of the first Mennonite church in Chortitza, built in 1790, the year after the first Mennonites arrived in the region. The second memorial was erected at a former Mennonite cemetery.

The conference also celebrated the opening of a Mennonite exhibit in a Zaporozhye museum.

The conference, on Mennonites in Russia and the Soviet Union, drew participants from North and South America, Europe and Russia.

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by the way ...

In probably the first Mennonite Central Committee relief sale, Mennonites in Herbert, Sask., in December 1920 held an auction of donated goods, raising $1,100 for famine relief work in Russia by the newly created MCC. —*Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* by Robert Kreider and Rachel Waltner Goossen

Indiana church honored for disability ministries

GOSHEN, Ind.—For its efforts to include people with disabilities, College Mennonite Church of Goshen has received one of the three 1999 Caring Church Awards from the Christian Council of Persons with Disabilities.

Most congregational participants with disabilities come from area Mennonite-related facilities. The congregation has a handbell choir of about two dozen people with disabilities, and each adult Sunday school class has developed relationships with two or three of them. Most of the church has been made wheelchair accessible, and the congregation is considering making its worship services available in sign language.

Birth marks South Dakota reservation storm

OGLALA, S.D.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) provided flashlights, candles, water containers, kerosene, propane, tarps and rope after June 4 tornadoes tore through South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

Five people were killed and 22 injured in the storms. Twenty-two homes were destroyed and another 150 damaged. MCC also plans to assist in reconstruction work.

MCC program coordinators Harley and Sue Eagle were not at home when the storms struck. They were in Rapid City, S.D., for the birth of their first child, Danielle Sage Eagle, on June 3.

"Seeing Danielle makes [the reservation residents] forget about life for awhile," Harley Eagle says. "To have a special story like this is good."—*MCC News Service*

First Mennonite hospital's centennial celebrated

GOESSEL, Kan.—Bethesda Home in Goessel has monthly birthday parties for its residents. But on June 12-13, it threw one for itself.

The home started in 1899 as the first Mennonite hospital in the United States, sponsored by local General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren and Krimmer Mennonite Brethren congregations. The hospital closed in 1982, but the long-term care facility continued.

The centennial celebration included historical displays and tours, musical performances, a multimedia program and a community worship service.—*Newton* (Kan.) *Kansan*

Number of religious mutual funds skyrockets

GOSHEN, Ind.—In 1993, there were six religious mutual funds. By last year, that number had exploded to 34, nearly a fivefold increase, according to a report generated for Mennonite Mutual Aid's Praxis Mutual Funds. Assets in those funds have grown from $1.5 billion to $4.5 billion since 1989.—*MMA News Service*

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Events

Hymnsing for peace, Washington, July 4. Sponsored by First Mennonite Church, Richmond, Va. Contact: 804-359-1340 or ecopow@erols.com.

Births

Alger, Alexander Don, April 23, to Jon and Melanie (Sommers) Alger, Orrville, Ohio.

Clemens, Olivia Von Gunten, May 18, to Amy (Von Gunten) and Kent Clemens, Baltimore.

Goering, Grayson Jerome, May 21, to Cheri (Robinson) and Tim Goering, Parker, Colo.

Hess, Anna Egan, May 10, to Barbara (Egan) and Don Hess, Leola, Pa.

Hightree, Kytrena Renee, May 15, to Jason and Nikki (Stucky) Hightree, Powersite, Mo.

Roth, Emily Sue, April 22, to Karla (Smucker) and Wynn Roth, Richmond, Ind.

Vance, John Luke, April 11, to John and Renée (Johns) Vance, Boise, Idaho.

Marriages

Beriozkina/Troyer: Anna Beriozkina, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia, and Aaron Troyer, Alva, Fla., May 8, at Beaverdam Mennonite Church, Corry, Pa.

Cressman/Juravinski: Wayne Cressman, Edmonton, and Rochelle Juravinski, Sherwood Park, Alta., June 5, at Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

Eichelberger/Polson: Miriam Eichelberger, Mackinaw, Ill., and James Polson, Hopedale, Ill., June 5, Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Stauffer/Zurbrigg: Rodney Stauffer, Edmonton, and Elise Zurbrigg, Sherwood Park, Alta., May 22, Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

Deaths

Davis, Roger Lee, 49, Waynesboro, Va., died April 2. Spouse: Mary Martin Davis. Parents: Kathleen Gutshall (deceased) and Crawford Davis. Other survivors: children Corey, Brett. Funeral: April 5 at Lynside Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

Diem, Donald, 43, Lebanon, Pa., died May 20 from an automobile accident. Spouse: Elaine Diem. Mother: Arlene Diem. Other survivors: children Cheryl Davidson, Doug, Roger, Marvin; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 25 at Myerstown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Eash, Jesse Leon, 59, Sarasota, Fla., died April 28 of cancer. Spouse: Fern Eash. Parents: Levi and Fannie Eash (deceased). Other survivors: children Lynne, Lowell. Funeral: May 4 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

Friesen, Ed, 63, Edmonton, died April 28. Spouse: Faye Roth Friesen. Other survivors: children Sherilyn, Kenton, Patty Friesen Preheim. Funeral: May 1 at Salem Mennonite Church, Tofield, Alta.

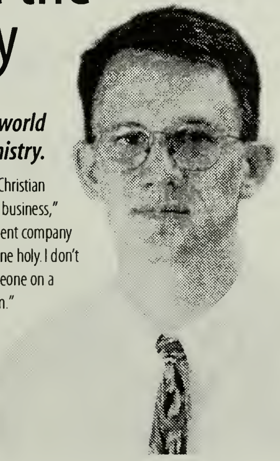
Hooley, Mary Gibson Reinhardt, 88, Goshen, Ind., died May 19. Spouse: (1st) Maurice Gibson (deceased); (2nd) Orvin Hooley (deceased). Parents: John and Lizzie (Miller) Reinhardt. Survivors: son Milton; two grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at Kouts, Ind.

Kief, Loren, 88, Albany, Ore., died May 22 of a stroke. Spouse: Nellie Kief. Parents: Albert and Henrietta Kief (deceased). Other survivors: children Judy Bacher, Ron, Jewell Stanley, Jim; 11 grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 26 at Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Mellinger, Florence Tyson, 85, Lancaster, Pa., died May 26. Spouse: Jacob Mellinger (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Emma Stauffer Tyson (deceased). Survivors: stepdaughters Mary Mellinger, Grace Landis, Ruth Shertzer. Funeral: May 31 at Lancaster.

Nussbaum, Luella Hofstetter, 83, Dalton, Ohio, died May 17 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Clarence Nussbaum. Parents: Abraham and Elizabeth Kratzer Hofstetter (deceased). Other survivors: children Gary, Dale, Loretta Amstutz, Brenda; six grandchildren, one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 21 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Ben, 88, Sarasota, Fla., died May 28. Spouse: Laura Yoder. Parents: Jonas and Katie Yoder (deceased). Funeral: June 1 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.



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- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a ***claims representative*** (relevant experience in property and/or auto loss adjusting desirable). Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., Attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities. Location: East Petersburg or Millersville, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time ***community living adviser*** positions available in various group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Bluffton, Ohio, has an immediate full-time opening for an ***associate pastor for youth and Christian education***; 75% middle school and high school youth work; 25% Christian education administration and program coordination. Multiple staff setting. M.Div. required.

  Contact Lois Wetherill, 101 S. Jackson St., Bluffton, OH 45817; 419-358-5766; email FMC@bluffton.edu

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants in ***apparel and textiles merchandising and design*** for a one-year appointment (with the possibility of extension) beginning fall 1999. Ph.D. preferred. Responsibilities include undergraduate teaching in apparel and textiles as well as interiors, human resource management and/or human ecology; advising, intern supervision and student recruitment for the apparel/textiles program; and advising family and consumer sciences education students. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until an appointment is made. For more information see http://www.bluffton.edu

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the academic dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, Lancaster, Pa., accredited K-8, is seeking teacher applicants for the following full-time positions: ***middle school science, middle school language arts*** and ***part-time 4th- and 5th-grade teachers***. Beginning August 1999.

  Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- **Association of Anabaptist Risk Management** (AARM) has immediate opening for additional staff person in the area of ***member account servicing***. Opportunity for entry into the risk management and commercial insurance fields. Excellent organizational and computer skills required with the ability to manage multiple tasks and give attention to detail.

  Send resume and references to Brent Styan, 2160 Lincoln Hwy. East, Suite 6, Lancaster, PA 17602-1150; 717-293-7840; bstyan@redrose.net

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  Contact Tim Stair at Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Western Mennonite School** has openings for fall 1999:

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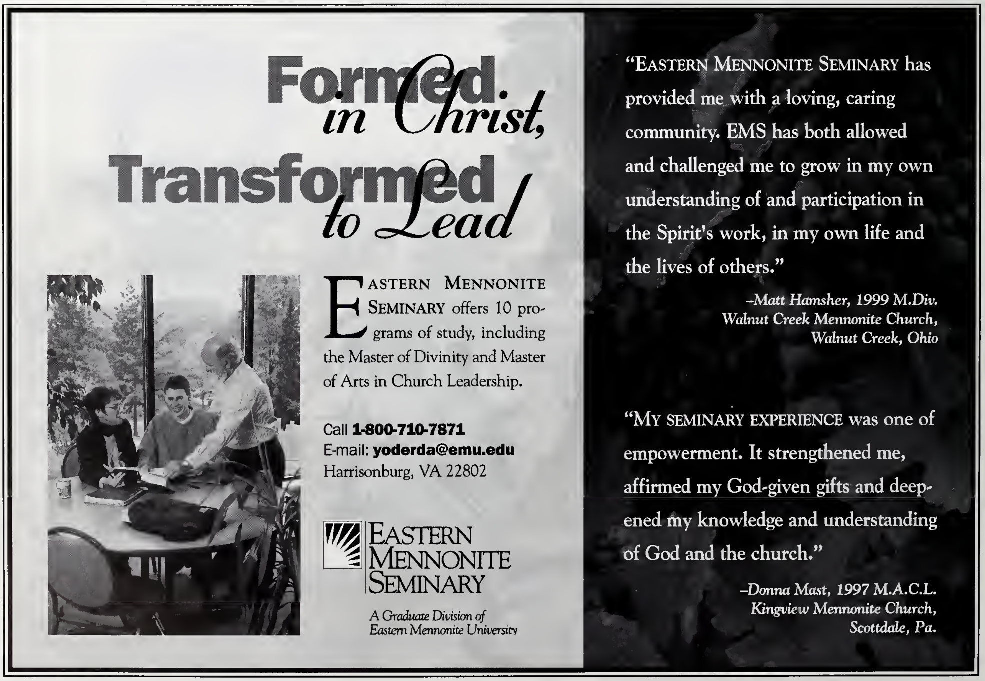

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"EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY has provided me with a loving, caring community. EMS has both allowed and challenged me to grow in my own understanding of and participation in the Spirit's work, in my own life and the lives of others."

–Matt Hamsher, 1999 M.Div.
Walnut Creek Mennonite Church,
Walnut Creek, Ohio

"MY SEMINARY EXPERIENCE was one of empowerment. It strengthened me, affirmed my God-given gifts and deepened my knowledge and understanding of God and the church."

–Donna Mast, 1997 M.A.C.L.
Kingview Mennonite Church,
Scottdale, Pa.

by Rich Preheim

Worshiping on the Trane tracks

For short, the San Francisco congregation is called St. John's, which is a rather common name. But, *The Other Side* says, the congregation is anything but that. It's complete name is St. John Will-I-Am Coltrane African Orthodox Church. And the late, legendary jazz saxophonist John "Trane" Coltrane is its patron saint.

Coltrane, the grandson of a minister, emerged as a leading jazz performer of the post-World War II era. But he became addicted to heroin and alcohol, which threatened his career. Finally, in 1957, he kicked the habits, became an ardent spiritual seeker and took jazz to unprecedented heights before he died of liver cancer at the age of 40 in 1967.

St. John's founder and bishop, Franzo Wayne King, started down the path to Christianity after hearing Coltrane in concert in 1965. King started the congregation in 1971, which became part of the African Orthodox Church in 1982. It's a small denomination started by African-Americans drawn to the Orthodox liturgy but who felt constrained by the Greek, Russian and Coptic ethnic dispositions.

Although the congregation's theology is quite traditional, worship is filled with musicians performing Coltrane songs while an icon of their patron saint looks down upon them from above the altar.

Y2K watch: As you do unto ...

Some Christians are hoarding food, stockpiling ammunition and barricading themselves against the threat of Y2K crumbling the world around us. But some other church groups are preparing to help those who might be adversely affected by the millennium bug.

"As people get increasingly concerned about the shortage of cash and the shortage of food later this year, we'll have an incredible opportunity to minister Jesus Christ to them," says Dave Hyland of Gananda Community Church, a Free Methodist congregation near Rochester, N.Y.

His group's plans, according to *FM Connection,* include providing information in anticipation of Y2K and coordinating relief efforts after Dec. 31 if necessary. Other Christian groups are offering seminars, starting food pantries and planning to provide lodging.

The price of whistle-blowing

This is a religious conflict of a different kind, one that has made Christoph Meili and his family the only Swiss nationals to be granted political asylum in the United States.

Two years ago, while making his evening rounds as a guard at the Union Bank of Switzerland in Zurich, Meili discovered boxes of Holocaust-era documents about to be shredded. He secretly took three ledgers to a Jewish organization, which turned them over to the police. As a result, a class-action lawsuit was brought against several Swiss banks, which have agreed to pay Holocaust survivors $1.45 billion for the seizure of Jewish holdings during World War II. Some records were also deemed relevant to research of Switzerland's dealings with the Nazis.

But a week after Meili's disclosure, he was fired and threatened with imprisonment for violating secrecy laws. His family received volumes of hate mail plus death and kidnapping threats. The U.S. government last year granted the Meilis permanent resident status.

"I removed the documents because it was the right thing to do," Meili, a Pentecostal, tells *National Catholic Reporter.* "But people don't always like you when you do the right thing."

After all, he says, that's why Christ was persecuted.

WWJD, circa 1896

The *Wichita* (Kan.) *Eagle* had to go back more than a century, but it offers this reminder of the source of the current WWJD trend.

Before there were bracelets and bumper stickers asking us "What Would Jesus Do?" there was Charles Sheldon, turn-of-the-century pastor of Central Congregational Church in Topeka, Kan., and author of the best-selling novel *In His Steps.* The book, first preached as a series of sermons in 1896, tells about a young printer who comes to town looking for work. Tired and hungry, he sits outside a prayer meeting, never invited to come in. He stumbles into the church and collapses. As he dies, he cries out, "What would Jesus do?"

In Sheldon's book, that question changes the congregation. And it is still having an effect.

Tidbits

- The average size of Christian congregations in the United States has grown from 91 members in 1890 to more than 300 today. —*The Parish Paper*
- In a 1997 survey of 1,000 adults, 87 percent felt they were bound for heaven, compared to 79 percent who thought Mother Teresa was destined for eternal glory.—*Context*
- Of 8,000 active priests in the Episcopal Church, fewer than 300 are younger than 35.—*Horizons*
- The blood pressure of Canadian churchgoers is 5.5 millimeters lower than of nonchurchgoers. —*Presbyterian Record*
- The number of visitors to Israel next year is expected to double to about 5 million.—*Light and Life*

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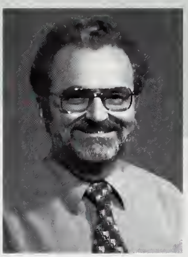


J. Lorne Peachey

What Ecclesiastes has to say about diversity

I've never expected much from the book of Ecclesiastes; it's not where I turn for devotional reading. So, in the current read-through-the-Bible-in-a-year foray I'm on, I was a bit surprised to be stopped by this verse: "Plant a variety of crops, for you never know which will grow—perhaps they all will" (Ecclesiastes 11:6, NLT).

As a weekend hit-or-miss gardener, I understand the first part of that verse well. It's why I plant 12 rather than six tomatoes or why my potatoes are six inches apart when the book says they should be twelve. You just never know.

Except for this spring. We've had the kind of weather in western Pennsylvania that makes the writer of Ecclesiastes also right with his afterthought: "Perhaps they all will."

Was that what God had in mind in the creation of the world with all its variety? That at least some would bring joy—maybe all?

In his book *Disappointment with God* (Zondervan, 1992), Philip Yancey tries to imagine what God must have felt like during creation. Yancey compares God to an artist who gets carried away with what he's doing, putting feelings into his work, agonizing over his creation. Then at the end, standing back like "a performer who cannot suppress a grin when the audience stands and cheers," God pronounces the created "very good." Not once but five times. "In the beginning, the very beginning, there was no disappointment," Yancey writes. "Only joy."

Does God approach human creation hoping against hope that at least some will want to love and enter into a deep relationship? Maybe even daring to dream it will be all?

Much of that joy must have come from the variety of creation. I became especially aware of that variety this spring as I bicycled the Yough River Trail near my home, lined with thousands of wildflowers of all colors and shades. I am reminded of it every time I visit a zoo or watch a National Geographic Society special on TV. I also become aware of difference when I wander through a mall or sit in a concert or a sporting event.

Why did God create so much diversity? Could it be God just wasn't sure which would grow into honor and worship? Or does God simply find joy in variety?

That's not the way we humans look at diversity. We want to simplify, quantify and reduce to the lowest common denominator. We are often uncomfortable with what's different, particularly when that difference challenges who we are and what we believe. Diversity in plants and animals we can appreciate, to be sure. But when the diversity shows up among people, particularly when those people are in our local congregation, our area conference or our denomination, we ask questions like these:

Why does the Spirit of God seem to be telling one person one thing and another person another? Why does God tolerate so many different interpretations of how to be Christian and live as disciples? Why isn't God more specific about how to solve modern ethical and moral dilemmas so that we can agree on them?

Tough questions, ones that have been asked by followers of Jesus throughout the centuries. What is God's purpose in creating so much diversity, much more than we, God's children, are often comfortable tolerating?

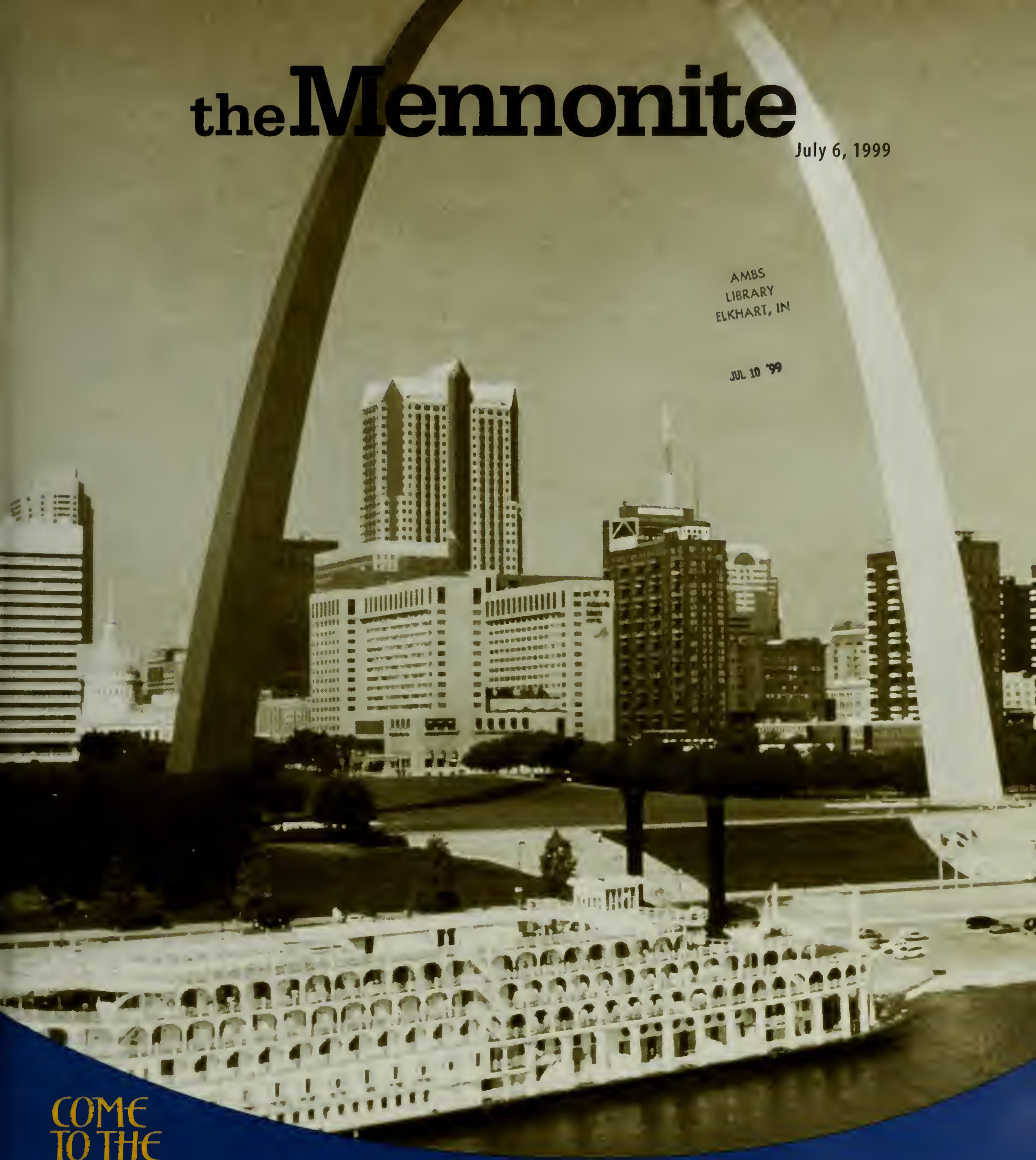
Now it's dangerous to pretend to know the mind of God. One can always be wrong, very wrong. But the God I encounter in the creation stories of the Bible and the God I see interacting with that creation is the same God who inspired the writer of Ecclesiastes to say: "Plant a variety ... for you never know which will grow."

Is that the way God approaches human creation? Hoping against hope that at least some will want to love and enter into a deep relationship? Maybe even daring to dream that it will be all? If so, then diversity becomes a way to glorify God, not something to avoid.

Without that perspective, we can become obsessed with doing away with the differences we experience, usually by trying to change others. That is when the writer of Ecclesiastes also helps us. "Notice the way God does things, then fall into line," he writes. "Don't fight the ways of God, for who can straighten out what he has made crooked?" (Ecclesiastes 7:13).—*jlp*

the Mennonite

July 6, 1999



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COME
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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Laying the foundation

I appreciated the report on the diverse understandings of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective ("Debate Over Membership Raises Questions About Confession of Faith Understandings," May 25). It gave me a historical frame in which to hold an image of our current struggle. I read with interest the mention of "fundamental, core beliefs in the confession" which are securely fixed, such as faith in Jesus Christ. I have longed to hear of these essentials. I have been wondering what happened to the concept of Anabaptism as simply existential Christianity—not creedal, having no explicit theology.

Perhaps I am a young dreamer (although I am old enough to remember keenly the 1972 establishment of Southeast Mennonite Conference, which the report referenced). Still, when I read of concern over "watering down beliefs and membership" through lack of doctrinal unity, I am inclined to conclude that such a watering would be the most powerful experience our denomination could have. It would take great courage to decide to lay no other foundation than has been laid: Christ Jesus.

Thank you for responsible reporting and ethical journalism.—*Miriam Showalter, Sarasota, Fla.*

The tradition of community

I admire John Zimmerman's pastoral sensitivity as well as his integrity in taking seriously Jesus' command against divorce and remarriage ("Why I Want to Stop Officiating at Weddings," June 8). However, I would question his conclusion that pastors should stop officiating at weddings altogether simply because the Bible does not spell out that role for pastors.

The Bible is silent on many Christian doctrines and practices, but that fact by itself does not invalidate them. For example, where in Scripture is Sunday designated as the Sabbath? And where does it say we should celebrate Christmas—or even Easter—once a year every year? Most importantly, in what Bible text does God give us a list of which books were inspired by him and therefore should make up the Bible in the first place?

These and many other things that Christians take for granted are not found explicitly anywhere in the Bible. But we consider these doctrines valid because they developed within the community of the early Christians. For example, of the many early Christian writings that once circulated and were considered inspired by one Christian group or another, the list of 27 that actually are divinely inspired and therefore constitute the New Testament was decided at the Council of Carthage in A.D. 397.

The fact that we rely on Christian tradition in addition to Scripture—even to tell us what is Scripture—should not disturb us. After all, Jesus in his earthly life did not write a single book that we know of, but he did found a community to carry on his work in the world and sent the Holy Spirit to guide them.

If we have faith in the New Testament, surely we can trust the Holy Spirit working in the church that compiled it to guide us on other matters, including marriage, as well.—*Kathy Scharplaz, Minneapolis, Kan.*

Walking by faith

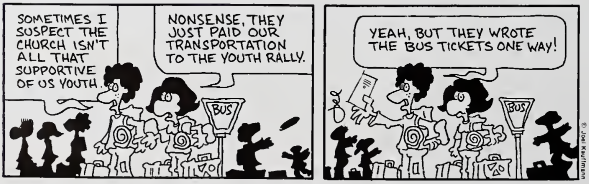
We do well to approach God with awe in the face of mystery. There is considerable mystery in "God's role in making good things happen," as said in the June 8 editorial ("When Good Things Happen to Bad People"). Here in the Northwest, the mountains and the water invoke unending awe. The majestic Mt. Rainier or the mighty ocean waves are truly awe-inspiring symbols and manifestations of God.

Is not the mystery of God even greater—if not more troubling—when bad things happen to good people? The editorial identified one dimension of the mystery with its headline. Yet another dimension of mystery is articulated by the source named in the editorial. Rabbi Harold Kushner brought this hard question to voice. But as I recall, he is very explicit about not asking, "Why bad things happen to good people?" That is an unanswerable and even unhealthy question in the face of God's great mystery.

How much difference a few letters in one little word makes! We stand in awe before the Great Mystery, and we struggle to live faithfully in the face of hard mystery. A first step is the struggle to ask the right question.

Here at Seattle Mennonite Church, we concluded our Sunday school year on June 13 with

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


SOMETIMES I SUSPECT THE CHURCH ISN'T ALL THAT SUPPORTIVE OF US YOUTH.
NONSENSE, THEY JUST PAID OUR TRANSPORTATION TO THE YOUTH RALLY.
BUS
YEAH, BUT THEY WROTE THE BUS TICKETS ONE WAY!
BUS
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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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y readers say

our children's program. Our worship included a "Litany for Children" by Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund. One line of that prayer to God is: "For your constant protection which keeps [children] safe from harm, we humbly praise you, O God." A mother of young children confessed to me how troubling it is to pray these words when so many of the world's children are harmed every day.

And yet we walk—and pray—by faith and not by sight.—*Weldon Nisly, Seattle*

Covering our violence

I think it was highly appropriate to put a gun on the cover of the May 18 issue. I am amazed at the naivete of those who objected to it. The possibility of violence exists everywhere, even among Christians and even among Mennonites. There certainly has been enough rancor expressed by Mennonites against Mennonites in *The Mennonite.* In Matthew 5, Jesus says not only will those who murder be brought to judgment but also those who nurse anger against their brothers.

Every time I yield to anger and abuse my brother, I am encouraging the use of violence. If I release my anger at someone, that person is now more likely to release his anger at someone else, and so on. Eventually, someone expresses his anger with a weapon. The two young men who did the killing at Columbine were supported in their hatred by all those who mocked and belittled them. And the mockers were just passing on what had happened to them.

Yes, the gun belongs on the cover. The gun pointed at us. For each of us has, by our anger and lack of love, whether or not we have ever even held a gun, supported those who do. May God forgive us, and may we learn to love and respect each other.—*Nicholas Dobratz, Pittsburgh*

Cover photo by St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission

COME
TO THE
RIVER
Revelation 22:1,2,17
St. Louis 99

Will the keystone fit?

We can learn from Paul's letter to the Corinthians as we work at building the church today, at bringing together the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

by Steve Yoder

In 1935, the St. Louis riverfront was selected as the site for a national monument to commemorate the westward expansion of the United States in the 19th century. The memorial site would be named the Jefferson National Memorial—so named to honor Thomas Jefferson. He envisioned a continental United States that went from coast to coast.

Over 40 blocks were cleared of homes and businesses to make room for this structure. Many designers and architects submitted their drawings in the competition for the monument's design. The winning monument design was Eero Saarinen's catenary curve-shaped arch, representing a gateway to the western frontier. Made of stainless steel and reaching a height of 630 feet, this arch would be the tallest human-made monument in the United States.

The planning and preparation stage of the arch took many years. World War II created shortages and delays. It wasn't until February 1961 that the actual building process began. Over 300,000 cubic feet of earth and rock were excavated in preparation for the foundation. The concrete foundation extended 60 feet into the ground and 30 feet into bedrock. The arch is made of sections of cubic equilateral triangles. The sections range from 12 feet to 8 feet in height. The two legs were built simultaneously and would eventually come together at the top.

The first 12-foot section weighed 50 tons. Special cranes called creeper derricks were built on the bottom sections and these cranes lifted each new section in place and inched their way upward on the legs of the arch.

This building project took over 3 years and went on through all kinds of weather. An amazing fact is that not one worker was killed. Before the project began, skeptics had predicted that as many as 13 people would die in this kind of building project.

Cultivating a common mind also requires a commitment to a common life. There must be a determination to work through a time of disagreement.

On Oct. 28, 1965, the final section called the keystone was put in place. The day was bright and sunny in St. Louis. TV cameras, news reporters, local and national dignitaries were on the scene along with many excited spectators. The big question in everyone's mind was whether or not the keystone would fit. To bring the two legs together, the engineering task had required that the keystone fit within a fraction of an inch. Everyone waited anxiously as the cranes hoisted the keystone 630 feet above the banks of the Mississippi River. Finally, a signal came from the top of the arch and a cheer went up. The keystone fit. The two legs of the arch were now connected into one long catenary curve. It would still take several years of work on the interior of the arch before any people could travel to the top of the arch and observe the view.

St. Louis is the sight for the gathering of Mennonites later this month. Part of the agenda for this gathering is to bring together the General Conference Mennonite Church with the Mennonite Church. The design is a two-nation structure within a single denomination.

Since the decision to integrate the two bodies was made at Wichita 95, planners and designers have been busy looking at ways to bring these bodies together. Like the building of the arch, this process has required many meetings and consultations and has involved a variety of disciplines. Bringing the two denominations together is like building the two legs of the arch. Both legs need to bend and curve toward the other in order to come together at the top. The convention this month could be likened to the placing of the keystone with the question, Will it fit?

A major hurdle in this process has been the question of membership in the new denomination. Churches that were disciplined in several Mennonite Church conferences also are members of conferences in the General Conference Mennonite Church but were not removed from those conferences. Should they belong to the new Mennonite Church?

A membership committee was formed and a

draft of guidelines was written recommending that all congregations belong to the new denomination. There was dissatisfaction with this proposal. Now we wonder, Will the two merge into one? Will the keystone fit?

Paul the apostle knew all about churches and divisions. His missionary zeal led him to establish communities of faith in various cities such as Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Berea. His preaching and teaching brought together many people on the common ground of faith in Jesus Christ.

The city of Corinth was a commercial center during Paul's day. It was considered by many to be the wealthiest city in Greece. Paul's message drew bronzeworkers, potters, shopkeepers and dockhands as well as some of the wealthier and more powerful segments of Corinthian society. Paul spent about 18 intense months with them, working among them as a tentmaker and helping bring them together as a viable church.

The rich diversity of the believers in Corinth would more accurately be compared to a rainbow than a gateway arch. Paul moved on from Corinth and worked in other cities. But through his contacts with people and through letters he was to learn later of the terrible divisions and strife in the Corinthian church.

Divisive issues are not a 20th-century creation. There are times we are tempted to think that if only the current issue of homosexuality were done away with we could be home free. There always will be forces at work to tear the church apart.

The Corinthians were divided over their leadership. They disagreed on laws relating to food sacrificed to idols. Some among them said that unless they spoke in tongues they were not filled with the Spirit of God. They disagreed on sexual conduct and what it means to be free in Christ. The Lord's Supper had become a time of gluttonous feasting and segregation between rich and poor. These were just a few of the challenges facing this church. Not a pretty sight.

Paul had his work cut out for him in trying to hold this group together. Was this even a viable congregation anymore? Should a for-sale sign be placed on the church lawn, or was there hope for this congregation?

Paul begins his letter in a surprising fashion. In his introduction to them in 1 Corinthians, he addresses the people as "those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." Not only does he call them saints, but he moves on to tell them that Jesus has enriched them in many ways, and they are not lacking in any spiritual gift as they await the full revelation of Jesus Christ. How strange for Paul to write this. How could people for whom God had been so good be behaving so badly? Just when it seems appropriate to lower the boom on these people, Paul calls them saints.

Yet how appropriate. Paul's strategy is for this group of people to get focused again on the common ground they share: faith in Jesus Christ. Shouldn't people who are called to be saints have a basis for working out their disagreements in a spirit of charity? Could it be that this Corinthian church had forgotten who they were? Paul's suspicion is that if people knew and talked about their common ground of God's work for them in Jesus Christ, it might make them grateful enough to begin to live together like saints.

Bringing the two denominations together is like building the two legs of the arch. Both legs need to bend and curve toward the other in order to come together at the top. The convention this month could be likened to the placing of the keystone with the question, Will it fit?

Paul could speak such words of confidence in the Corinthian believers because he had worked diligently at building relationships with them. He loved them and was determined to walk beside them through this time of dissension. He had earned the right to speak confidently because he had labored with them for a year and a half. Recognizing God's work in their lives was the first step in the process of helping them maintain their unity in times of division. Cultivating a common mind also requires a commitment to a common life. There must be a determination to work through a time of disagreement.

We can learn from Paul's letter as we work at building the church today. Our denominational leaders have called us to be committed to prayer in this process of building the new Mennonite Church. May our prayers help us to see who we are as the church. May our eyes be opened to see that we are people who have been blessed by God's grace. We have been enriched in many ways because of a common faith in the life and death of Jesus Christ. We are called to be saints. May God help us remember who we are, and in so doing we may discover and find the way to bring us together in unity. Then we will have something to shout about: The keystone fits!

Steve Yoder is associate pastor at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

COME TO THE RIVER
Revelation 22:1,2,17
St. Louis 99

Changing times, mixed emotions

Anticipated end of current church bodies produces joy, sadness, concern

by Rich Preheim

Ron Krehbiel's paternal family history is in many ways the history of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). The two intersect at so many points that they are often indistinguishable.

The anticipated integration of the General Conference Mennnonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada by virtue of delegate action at St. Louis 99 is being met by a wide range of emotions. For Krehbiel, it is a joyous occasion, even though it means the end of a body in which he and his forebears have played prominent roles.

Krehbiel, of Hesston, Kan., is a fourth-generation GC minister. His great-great-grandfather, Christian Krehbiel, in 1864 became pastor of Summerfield (Ill.) Mennonite Church, one of the first congregations to join the new General Conference Mennonite Church when it was formed in 1860. He helped organized the Western District and Central District conferences and was the first GC mission board president.

Christian's son C.E. held many GC positions, including field secretary, president and secretary. His son, Olin, became a GC pastor, and Olin's son, Ron, who is now retired, followed his father into the pulpit and also served as GC assistant moderator.

One stated purpose behind creating the General Conference Mennonite Church 139 years ago was to bring all Mennonites together into one body. "My feeling is [integration] is really in keeping with the beginnings of the General Conference Mennonite Church," Krehbiel says.

Longtime Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) administrator Ernest Bennett shares Krehbiel's positive feelings. Retired and living in Elkhart, Ind., Bennett grew up Methodist but joined the Mennonite Church while in high school. In addition to his MBM tenure, he also helped start Mennonite Health Assembly and served with Mennonite Central Committee.

"I tend to think of Mennonites being all one because I came from a non-Mennonite background originally," Bennett says. "My bias leans toward things that can … strengthen our interrelationships."

"I don't have an emotional tie to the [current] Mennonite Church."

But Rachel Fisher of Goshen, Ind., does. She worked for 13 years as an administrative assistant in the offices of the MC executive secretary and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, spent another 10 years on the pastoral staff of College Mennonite Church in Goshen and served on the MC General Board. Fisher is glad at least one tangible piece of evidence of the denomination's identity will remain in the form of its name.

"It will still be the Mennonite Church, for which I'm grateful," she says.

The anticipated end of the GC era also tugs at Bertha Harder's heartstrings. "For me, it is filled with a little sorrow and sadness," says

> For me, [integration] is filled with a little sorrow and sadness. And I will be ready to move into an extended family.
> —*Bertha Harder*

OUR FOUNDATION
JESUS CHRIST
OTHER FOUNDATION CAN NO MAN LAY THAN THAT

GCMC files

Harder, of North Newton, Kan., who was the first woman on a GC board, joining the Board of Christian Service in 1955. "And I will be ready to move into an extended family."

That family was first enlarged in the United States five years ago on the West Coast. Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences were formed out of one GC and two MC area conferences to create the first U.S. integrated conferences.

"I think we need to recognize certain things were for certain times and they were good," says Pacific Northwest moderator Pat Hershberger. "We need to keep finding ways to be relevant to the places and times where we are."

But John Drescher of Quakertown, Pa., questions whether such a denominational restructuring is a way to remain relevant. Drescher, who was the first moderator following the Mennonite Church's 1971 reorganization, says the current trend emphasizes congregations instead of conferences.

"People are increasingly less concerned about organization," he says.

There are plenty of other concerns as well, including polity and theological differences. "I would tend to err on the side of caution," says Carlton Minnis of Philadelphia, former Eastern District Conference pastor and conference minister. "As long as these differences remain, ... these tensions will remain."

Those tensions may prompt individuals, congregations and perhaps even area conferences to leave the integrating church, a thought that produces mixed emotions among integration supporters. "Sometimes there are casualties due to change," says current MC moderator Dwight McFadden of New Holland, Pa.

Vern Preheim, GC general secretary from 1980 to 1996, was one of integration's strongest proponents in its early years. But he acknowledges that more people may not go along with integration than he had anticipated.

"I know there's some tough things to sort through and a lot of frustrations on the part of many people," says Preheim, of Newton, Kan.

At Bethesda Mennonite Church in St. Louis, the anticipated end of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church has produced "no weeping and gnashing of teeth," says pastor Rick Maclin.

"It probably does have some historical significance," he says. "I really can't say it's negative or positive. ... We just stay ministry-focused."

Ministry by the new church was the point emphasized by Louise Auernheimer of Reedley, Calif., who has been active in church women's organizations and was the first secretary for Pacific Southwest.

"Our ultimate goal," she says, "is to be instruments of sharing the good news and peace with all ethnic groups and cultures by following Christ's example."

At St. Louis, in anticipation of delegate actions, the three integrating bodies each plant to hold commemorations of their history during the St. Louis convention.

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite.

Archives of the Mennonite Church

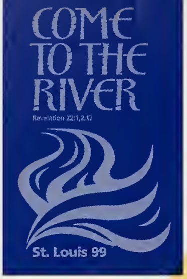
Until the 1983 convention at Bethlehem, Pa., the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church had always met separately, including the GC sessions at Bluffton, Ohio, in 1959 (left) and the MC gathering at Belleville, Pa., in 1927 (above). This summer's convention in St. Louis will be the fourth time GC and MC sessions have been held jointly.

Mennonite mergers: deja vu all over again

For all the splits in North American Mennonite history, there have also been merger attempts. Perhaps the first and most successful was the Central Conference Mennonite Church with the General Conference Mennonite Church. The Central Conference was born out of an 1872 Amish schism in Illinois. The group became an organized independent conference in 1908, then became a GC area conference in 1946. The Central Conference and the GC Middle District Conference formed the current Central District Conference in 1957.

In 1960, the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren joined the larger Mennonite Brethren. An unsuccessful merger attempt came in 1962, when, after 10 years of discussions, the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (now the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches) voted to discontinue its merger talks with the Evangelical Mennonite Church.

—Rich Preheim



Step by step

Why 15 resolutions are needed to create two integrated bodies

by Rich Preheim

If all goes as planned in St. Louis July 23-27, a new Mennonite Church Canada will be created immediately and steps will be taken to finalize its U.S. counterpart two years later, leaving the current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church as U.S. bodies for two more years.

But to get to that point, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) delegates over three days will have to work their way, step by step, through 15 resolutions, which cover nine pages in the convention workbook, plus dozens more pages of reports and background material—all to transform the three church groups into two country church bodies.

While the resolutions may sound just as complex as the integration process has been, there is a method to the madness. It is supposed to happen this way:

The first actions are scheduled to come on Saturday afternoon, July 24, in a joint session of GC, MC and CMC delegates. Leading off will be the linchpin for the rest of the assembly: the resolution to create two parallel country bodies, one in the United States and one in Canada. The subsequent resolutions—two for the U.S. and Canadian delegates together and six each for them separately—are all based on the two-country model. All resolutions will need to be passed by a two-thirds majority.

After approving the two-country model, the delegates will immediately act to maintain current GC commissions and MC boards as binational entities until the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church are completely reorganized. The resolution also authorizes the U.S. and Canadian leadership to begin allocating current binational GC and MC resources to the two country church bodies.

The GC, MC and CMC delegates will then regroup into separate Canadian and U.S. assemblies on Monday, July 26, to act on resolutions to give shape to their new country bodies. The U.S. delegates will vote on the name "Mennonite Church U.S." for the new body and on a "blueprint for change"—the reports and recommendations of the committees charged with developing plans for the U.S. church. That includes a new U.S. Executive Board, other organizational structures and a timeline for further work. But the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church will also remain intact in the United States until issues such as membership and incorporation have been worked out. The resolution sets 2001 as the goal for the complete creation of the U.S. church. That's when the GC and MC delegate assemblies are scheduled to convene for the last time before forming the integrated assembly.

But they will be without their Canadian brothers and sisters. Also on July 26, the Canadian group, to be called "Mennonite Church Canada," will act on measures to immediately create a new body north of the border. That will mean the Canadians will no longer be GC or MC members, leaving the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church as U.S. bodies.

Thus the new U.S. Executive Board will be created for a church that doesn't exist yet. In the meantime, the board will serve both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. To do that, however, U.S. GC and MC delegates that same day will have to make constitutional and bylaw changes to give authority to the new board. The U.S. delegates will then affirm board nominees the next morning, Tuesday, July 27 (see list, page 9).

Also that morning, U.S. and Canadian delegates, still meeting in separate sessions, will vote on the proposed membership guidelines, which have been a source of contention in the integration process. The guidelines are the same for the U.S. and Canadian bodies, but the resolutions coming to each delegate assembly differ dramatically. Canadian delegates will vote to implement the guidelines while the U.S. resolution will only commend the guidelines "as a first reading in this assembly and for subsequent study, with delegate action to be taken at a time to be determined by the Executive Board."

Finally, all delegates will meet in joint session on Tuesday afternoon, July 27, to act on the final resolution: guidelines for partnerships between the U.S. and Canadian bodies.

That's the plan.

New jobs in store for GC, MC leaders

The changes in the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC), if approved by the St. Louis 99 delegates, should not send their general secretaries to the unemployment line.

Current MC general secretary George Stoltzfus has been invited to be general secretary for the Mennonite Church U.S. Executive Board, which is to be selected at St. Louis.

GC general secretary Jim Schrag will direct Project: Transformation, the plan to create the U.S. church body by 2001.

In Canada, plans call for the current leadership of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada to hold the same positions in the new Mennonite Church Canada.—*Rich Preheim*

U.S. Executive Board nominees

The following are to be affirmed by U.S. delegates at St. Louis 99 for the 20-member Mennonite Church U.S. Executive Board:

Executive Committee

Lee Snyder, moderator (two-year term), First Mennonite Church (GC), Bluffton, Ohio. President, Bluffton (Ohio) College.
Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect (four-year term), Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church (MC). Lancaster Conference moderator and associate professor of church ministries, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.
Duane Oswald, secretary (four-year term), Mennonite Community Church (GC-MC), Fresno, Calif. Health-care company president and CEO.
Roy Williams (two-year term), College Hill Mennonite Church (MC), Tampa, Fla. Pastor.
James M. Harder (four-year term), Shalom Mennonite Church (GC-MC), Newton, Kan. Associate professor of economics, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Additional board members (two-year terms)

Don Barnhill, Gospel Light Church (MC), Atmore, Ala. Construction company owner and president.
R. Lee Delp, Grace Mennonite Church (GC), Lansdale, Pa. Packing company president and CEO.
Patricia Hershberger, Pacific Covenant Mennonite Church (GC-MC), Canby, Ore. Homemaker.
Harold N. Miller, Community Mennonite Fellowship of Corning (N.Y.) (MC). Pastor.
Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, Iglesia Menonita Unida de Avivamiento (MC), Brooklyn, N.Y. Social worker.
Norma Wiens, Faith Mennonite Church (GC), Newton, Kan. Retired.
Diane Zaerr, Hively Avenue Mennonite Church (GC), Elkhart, Ind. Associate dean, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart.

Additional board members (four-year terms)

Cleon Claassen, Menno Mennonite Church (GC-MC), Ritzville, Wash. Accountant.
Leslie Francisco III, Calvary Community Church (MC), Hampton, Va. Pastor.
Susan Gingerich, College Mennonite Church (MC), Goshen, Ind. Development director, Bethany Christian Schools, Goshen.
Shoua Moua, Hmong Mennonite Church (GC), Arvada, Colo. Pastor.
Ruth Naylor, First Mennonite Church (GC), Bluffton, Ohio. Spiritual director and writer.
Jane Hoober Peifer, Community Mennonite Church (MC), Harrisonburg, Va. Pastor.
Lois Thieszen Preheim, Bethesda Mennonite Church (GC), Henderson, Neb. Former school administrator and teacher.
Edwin Rempel, Beth El Mennonite Church (MC), Colorado Springs, Colo. Rocky Mountain Conference area minister.

Guidelines call for the U.S. Executive Board to be comprised of half men, half women, at least five people of color, 40 pecent General Conference Mennonite Church members and 60 percent Mennonite Church members. Skills, age and geographic representation are also considered. Board composition criteria will be re-evaluated after six years.

St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission

By the river

America's Center and the adjoining Trans World Dome in downtown St. Louis will be the site of most St. Louis 99 convention activities, including exhibits, seminars, worship, delegate assemblies and the children's and high school youth conventions. The junior high convention will be held on the campus of Southern Illinois University in nearby Edwardsville. Ten thousand people are expected for the July 23-27 events.

Church members called to prayer

When St. Louis 99 assembles by the river July 23-27, convention organizers want participants to create a river of prayer.

All General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada congregations and individuals are being encouraged to pray "to discern God's call for the new Mennonite Church and to undergird the delegates who will be making decisions" about integration, according to the invitation from St. Louis 99 planners.

Congregations should write their prayers on strips of cloth and bring them to St. Louis to be woven together with those from other congregations to form a "river of prayer" during the July 25 worship service.

Worship aids and specific prayer requests have been included in a mailing to all congregations.—*GCMC-MC-CMC news services*

COME TO THE RIVER
Revelation 22:1,2,17
St. Louis 99

Spanning the generations

10,000 people, from children to adults, are expected at St. Louis 99

from GCMC-MC-CMC news services

No one can accuse the organizers of St. Louis 99 of ageism. In addition to the delegate sessions, the joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) is scheduled to have events for every age group.

During the July 23-27 convention, about 10,000 people are expected for the five programs to be held under the St. Louis 99 banner: children's, junior high youth, high school youth, young adult and adult. Most events will be in the America's Center convention facility in downtown St. Louis.

While the convention will be the fourth time the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church have met together, this will be the first time they will be joined by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

At the beginning: With the theme of "Celebrate Diversity," Children's Convention coordinator June Thomsen wants to lay a foundation. "If we truly want to work toward a church that accepts and celebrates the gifts of all kinds of people, one way to begin is with the children," she says.

About 280 children in grades one through six are expected for the Children's Convention.

"Each day we'll be celebrating a different aspect of diversity," says Thomsen, of Bluffton, Ohio.

That will include having blind and deaf people serve as resource people and sharing stories from Indian, African-American, European-American and Japanese cultures.

Each day will also include worship, led by Chuck and Bonnie Neufeld of Markham, Ill., and worship teams from Bluffton (Ohio) and Goshen (Ind.) colleges.

Raising awareness: Some 370 students entering grades seven through nine this fall are expected at the Junior High Convention, which will be held on the campus of Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, about 20 miles east of downtown St. Louis.

One convention activity will be a service project: collecting, sorting and assembling refugee kits for Mennonite Central Committee. Convention planners want to get permission from the city and churches of Edwardsville to do door-to-door canvassing to collect some of the kit contents as a way to raise community awareness about Mennonites and their beliefs.

Repeat success: The Youth Convention is again proving to be a major draw as more than 6,100 high school-age youth and their sponsors have registered. Like at past conventions, activities will include service projects and worship. Featured presenters will be Bernice King, daughter of the late Martin Luther King Jr., Tony Campolo and Ken Medema.

"We don't want to lose the perspective that what the Youth Convention is primarily about is commitment or recommitment to Christ," says Carlos Romero, Youth Convention coordinator and MC minister of youth. "That's the heartbeat of the convention."

Something new this year will be set up on the floor of the Trans World Dome stadium adjoining America's Center. Called River City, it will include a small amusement park, drama theaters, bookstore, prayer tent, food court, coffeehouse and Mennonite college and seminary displays.

All Youth Convention participants will also take part in a two-hour anti-racism forum, led by trainers from the Damascus Road anti-racism initiative.

Convention attention: At St. Louis 99, young adults will receive more convention attention than ever before. "We want young adults to have a place of priority in the church, and we hope this will help establish that place," says Jill Landis, co-coordinator of the St. Louis 99 young adult events and a student at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.

Activities will include lunchtime forums on church issues, worship services and a cruise on the Mississippi River. A block of rooms in one of the downtown hotels has been set aside for young adults, and a young adult lounge will be available in America's Center.

"We want to make it a place where young adults can come together and dialogue and find others in the church," Landis says.

Worship and the Word: Worship and Bible study will be major components of the Adult Convention. St. Louis 99 will open Friday morning, July 23, with preaching by Integration Committee co-chairs Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio, and John C. Murray, Hesston, Kan.

Other worship services during the conven-

Peace gathering to be time to dream

Looking toward a new millennium and a new Mennonite Church, Mennonites with a passion for peace will meet to dream about both.

The General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada will sponsor "Of Roots and Branches," a peace gathering to be held July 20-22, prior to the GC-MC-CMC convention in St. Louis July 23-27. The gathering will be held at Revive Us Again Christian retreat center in Fenton, Mo., just south of St. Louis.

The gathering will feature reflections from peacemakers, Bible studies, seminars, "dream time" and fellowship time.

"Peace people sometimes get lonely, and we need to see each other face to face to get revived and feel God's Spirit moving among us," says organizer Susan Mark Landis, Mennonite Church minister for peace and justice.—*GCMC-MC-CMC news services* tion will feature the Peace Evangelists, a group representing the geographical, gender and ethnic diversity of North American Mennonites; Irma Fast Dueck, Toronto; Diane Zaerr, Elkhart, Ind.; and Jacob F. Pauls, Winnipeg. Other than the opening service, worship will be held in the evenings.

In the mornings, J. Nelson Kraybill, Elkhart, Ind., will lead Bible studies on Revelation. Iris deLeon Hartshorn, Lancaster, Pa., will be the worship leader. Each morning session will include a reading from Revelation in English and in Spanish, Lao or Cheyenne.

Sunday, July 25, will be Faith Family Day, including a hymnsing, a celebration of the centennials of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions and a performance by a Nigerian music group from Southern California. No delegate business will be conducted.

Among other convention activities will be concerts, dramas and comedy presentations. All seminars will be based on the "Vision: Healing and Hope" statement and will cover topics such as Bible study resources, antiracism training, parenting adult children, Native spirituality and leadership in Hispanic congregations.

More than 2,300 adults have registered for the Adult Convention.

COME TO THE RIVER

GCMC-MC-CMC photo by David Habegger

A banner convention

Using the St. Louis 99 slogan and logo, LaVeta Habegger of Fort Wayne, Ind., has created a wall hanging to highlight St. Louis 99. She has made wall hangings for eight area conference, churchwide and Mennonite World Conference gatherings.

by the way ...

The main meeting hall for the 1923 General Conference Mennonite Church triennial sessions in Freeman, S.D., was sold after the conference for $1,000 to a local Hutterite colony, which used the lumber for a hog barn. The meeting hall was a temporary structure built specifically for the conference.
—*Freeman* (S.D.) *Courier*

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Workers

Keim, David, concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., on May 30.
Osborne, Millard, concluded a pastorate at Charlottesville (Va.) Mennonite Church on April 30.
Pineda, Orlando, began a pastorate at Iglesia Cristiana Menonita de Dallas, Dallas, on May 9.
Smith, Jeff, wasinstalled May 30 as associate pastor at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.
Steelberg, Don, concluded a pastorate at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., on May 23.

Births

Clark, Hunter James, May 29, to Jeff and Karrie (Bromley) Clark, Middlebury, Ind.
Deiter, Alyssa Kaitlin, May 21, to Coleen and Kevin Deiter, Lancaster, Pa.
Delp, Evan Michael, June 2, to Brenda (Swope) and Randy Delp, Telford, Pa.
Denney, Shiloah Faith, May 30, to Peter and Shannon (Zehr) Denney, Lowville, N.Y.
Epp, Bryn Michael Friesen, June 6, to Arlyn and Judith Friesen Epp, Waterloo, Ont.
Flynn, Brenna Leigh, May 21, to Michael and Tonja (Martin) Flynn, Pittsburgh.
Habegger, Kelly Beverly, June 15, to Eric and Lisa (Loeffler) Habegger, Newton, Kan.
Haycraft, Charles James Nam McKee, May 22, 1998, received for adoption Jan. 30, 1999, by Anne (McKee) and Ken Haycraft, Glendale, Ariz.
Hershberger, Sofia Esperanza Mullet, May 26, to Leah (Mullet) and Paul Hershberger, Managua, Nicaragua.
Hess, Kyle Jeffrey, May 20, to Jeffrey and Stacey (Funck) Hess, Marietta, Pa.
Kipfer, Matthew Ross, May 28, to Marlene and Randy Kipfer, Kitchener, Ont.
Leaman, Joshua Seth, June 8, to Doris (Huber) and Harold Leaman, Lancaster, Pa.
Longenecker, Taylor John, June 15, to Kevin and Shelby (Bauman) Longenecker, Harrisonburg, Va.
Miller, Alexandra Jade, May 28, 1998, received for adoption April 27, 1999, by Jeff and Maxine (Klink) Miller, Grantsville, Md.
Miller, Benjamin Lee, David Glenn and Timothy Ronald (triplets), June 8, to Deb (Litwiller) and Loren Miller, Stanford, Ill.
Nafziger, Eliot Franklin, May 11, to Gail (Hess) and Shawn Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.
Naito, Hannah Grace and Jared Sidney (twins), June 12, to Kris (Volkers) and Sid Naito, Nampa, Idaho.
Norton, Jonathan David, June 12, to Charles and Elizabeth (Martinez) Norton, Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca, Mexico.
Regier, Ty Dillon, June 17, to Jennifer (Kroeker) and Joel Regier, Lincoln, Neb.
Ressler, Sarah Maria, May 28, to Barbara (Mosher) and Winfred Ressler, Kidron, Ohio.
Roth, Landon Paul, June 5, to Stan and Susan (Stuckey) Roth, Archbold, Ohio.
Ruby, Lydia Margaret, June 7, to Mary Ann (Schumm) and Myron Ruby, Tavistock, Ont.
Ruth, Olivia Camille, June 3, to Craig and Naomi (Frederick) Ruth, Lancaster, Pa.
Stowell, Lindsey Nichole, June 11, to Jana (Oesch) and Michael Stowell, Nampa, Idaho.
Swedhein, Hunter Kyle, April 16, to Angie (Plank) and Steve Swedhein, Cheraw, Colo.
Van Zanten, Ruby Saskia, May 22, to Erwin and Marta (Longacre) van Zanten, Langhorne, Pa.
Wenger, Lucas John, May 21, to John and Sandy (Eberly) Wenger, Bellefontaine, Ohio.
Wyse, Connor Ryan, May 30, to Barnaby and Michelle (Thuma) Wyse, Archbold, Ohio.
Yoder, Caitlin Jean, May 26, to Scott and Wilma (Helmuth) Yoder, Hartville, Ohio.
Yoder, Nicholas Jay, June 4, to Barry and Tonya (Miller) Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.

Marriages

Allison/Snyder: Angela Allison, Goshen, Ind., and Ben Snyder, New Paris, Ind., May 30 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Bearinger/Fay: Rebecca Bearinger, Petersburg, Ont., and Trevor Fay, Conestoga, Ont., April 24 at Mannheim Mennonite Church, Petersburg.
Bertsche/Grittman: Nancy Bertsche, Lenexa, Kan., and Brad Grittman, Lenexa, May 1 at Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.
Buttermore/Epp: Andrew Buttermore, Gretna, Neb., and April Epp, Henderson, Neb., June 19, at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Christner/Kauffman: Darlene Christner, Goshen, Ind., and Elwood Kauffman, Millersburg, Ind., June 12, at Goshen.
Dutton/Roach: Tara Dutton, Uniontown, Ohio, and Timothy Roach, North Canton, Ohio, June 12, at Hartville Mennonite Church.
Eppard/Gehman: Patrick Eppard, Elkton, Va., and Karin Gehman, Harrisonburg, Va., May 29 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.
Freese/Seiler: Michelle Freese, Spencerville, Ind., and Ronald Seiler, Spencerville, June 12, at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind.
Friesen/Sullivan: Suzanne Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Richard Sullivan, May 29 at Kendall United Methodist Church, Miami.
Graf/Schweitzer: Nathan Graf, Corn, Okla., and Amy Schweitzer, Wellman, Iowa, June 5 at Wellman (Iowa) Mennonite Church.
Honeybone/Liechty: Stanley Honeybone, Lansdale, Pa., and Karin Liechty, Chalfont, Pa., June 5 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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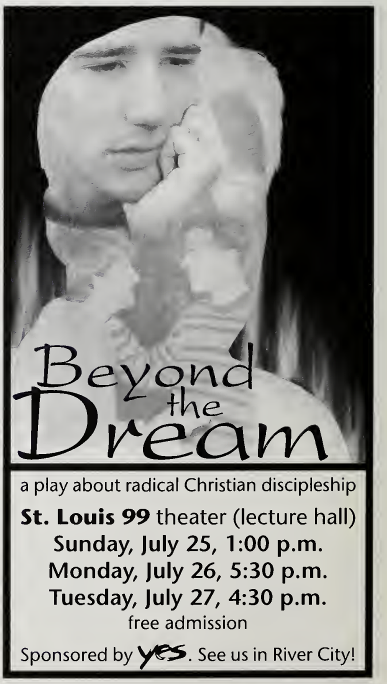

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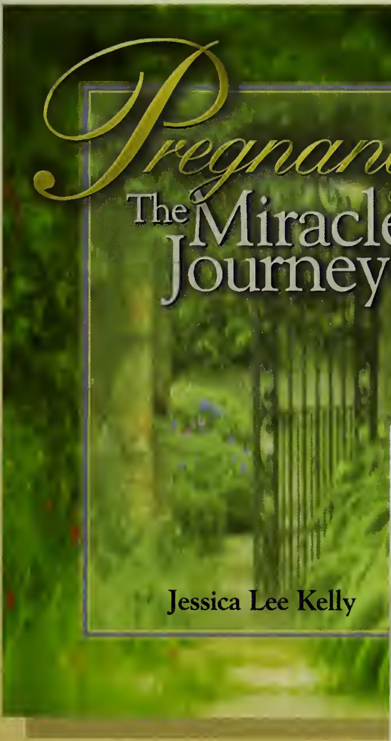
Pregnancy
The Miracle Journey
Jessica Lee Kelly

Jessica Lee Kelly with her two boys

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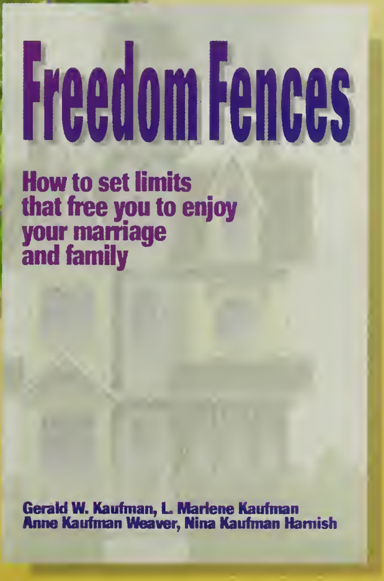
Jessica Lee Kelly presents a timely topic for each week of the journey. Stories touch the spirit, and Scripture strengthens the soul. Use this journal to record your memorable moments.
Paper, 128 pages, 0-8361-9088-2: $12.99; in Canada $19.29


Freedom Fences
How to set limits that free you to enjoy your marriage and family
Gerald W. Kaufman, L. Marlene Kaufman
Anne Kaufman Weaver, Nina Kaufman Harnish

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The Kaufmans will be leading a seminar at St. Louis 99 on Saturday, July 24, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

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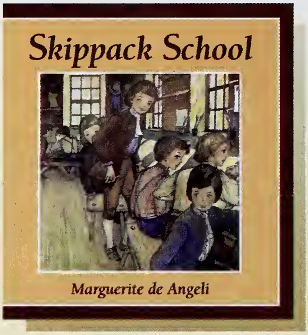
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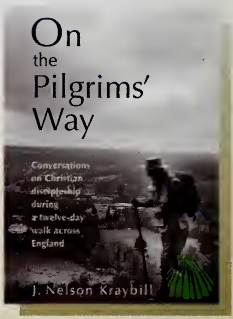
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Conversations on Christian discipleship during a twelve-day walk across England
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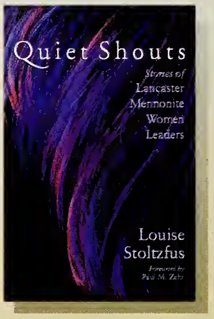
Quiet Shouts
Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders
Louise Stoltzfus

Quiet Shouts

Lyrically tells the moving and sometimes haunting stories of 20th century Lancaster Mennonite women who amid constraints nevertheless found ways to share leadership gifts. Also reflects the experiences of women in other Christian denominations.
Paper, 248 pages, 0-8361-9116-1: $12.99; in Canada $19.29

On the Pilgrims' Way

J. Nelson Kraybill, along with fellow pilgrims, shares insights on prayer, community, peacemaking, and more in this provocative handbook on issues every disciple of Jesus needs to consider.
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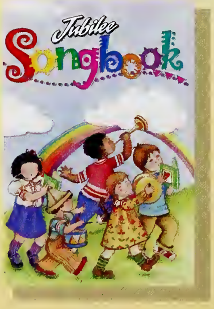
Jubilee
Songbook

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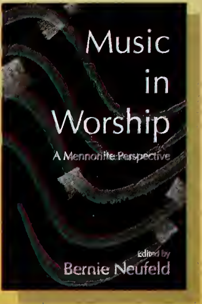
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in
Worship
A Mennonite Perspective
edited by
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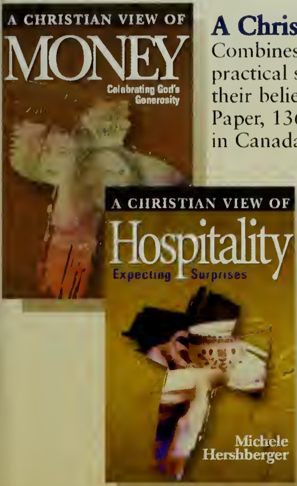
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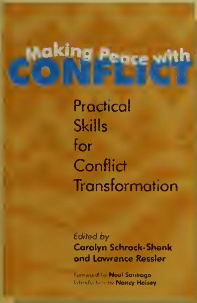
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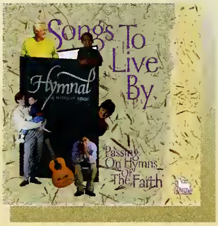

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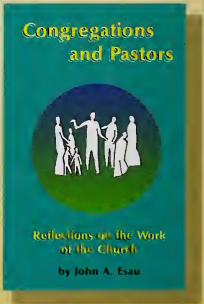
Congregations and Pastors
Reflections on the Work of the Church
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Congregations and Pastors: Reflections on the Work of the Church

How can you and other church members partner with your minister to be the dynamic faith community God intends? This collection from one of the most popular columns in *Mennonite Weekly Review* includes selections exploring a wide range of practical issues related to effective leadership and the functioning of congregations. Many of the selections deal with seldom-addressed questions of how lay people and pastors can work effectively together. A must for all who serve the church. By **John A. Esau.**
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Calloused Hands, Courageous Souls
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Calloused Hands, Courageous Souls: Holistic Spirituality of Development and Mission

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Horst/Martzall: Cindy Horst, Akron, Pa., and Leslie Martzall, Ephrata, Pa., May 15 at Akron.
Horton/Siemens: Stephen Eugene Horton, Kansas City, Mo., and Barbara Joann Siemens, Newton, Kan., June 12, at Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas.
Jakubec/Ressler: Joshua Jakubec, Quarryville, Pa., and Genevieve Ressler, Kennett Square, Pa., April 17, at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.
Leaman/Orley: Michelle Leaman, Willow Street, Pa., and Andrew Orley, Wadsworth, Ohio, June 12 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Leaman/Stettler: Jenelle Leaman, Lancaster, Pa., and Robert Stettler, Strasburg, Pa., June 5 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Peters/Tong: Christa Peters, Reedley, Calif., and Quay Tong, Sanger, Calif., May 22 at Fresno, Calif.
Reinford/Swartley: Richard Reinford, Sellersville, Pa., and Shana Swartley, Silverdale, Pa., June 5 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Rhodes/Witmer: Martin Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., and Sylvia Witmer, Broadway, Va., June 12, at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Baer, Russell, 78, Elizabethtown, Pa., died June 6 of cancer. Spouse: Gladys Shank Baer. Parents: Henry and Ella Keener Baer (deceased). Other survivors: children Conrad, Ronald, Gerald, James, Shirley Kurtz, Patricia Stoltzfus; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: June 10 at Elizabethtown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Bender, Velma Marie Yoder, 79, Goshen, Ind., died June 3. Spouse: David Bender (deceased). Parents: Mose and Mary Ann Troyer Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Philip, Anne Wilson; one grandchild. Funeral: June 7 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Brookmyer, Donita Mae, 81, Goshen, Ind., died June 1. Spouse: Edward Brookmyer. Parents: Mahlon and Verda Zook Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Sally Hammitt, Jon, Alicia Brenneman, Nedra Steury; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 5 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Flaming, Warren James, 46, Hesston, Kan., died June 3. Spouse: Cheryl Jo Froese Flaming. Parents: Randolf and Laura Schmidt Flaming. Other survivors: daughter Ana. Memorial service: June 6 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Gardner, Victor, 82, Goshen, Ind., died May 2. Spouse: Evelyn Gardner. Parents: Jesse and Dora Gardner (deceased). Other survivors: children Vicki Lichti, Brenda Smith, Ronald; nine grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Clinton Brick Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Gerig, Stella Jennings, 102, Sarasota, Fla., died June 9. Spouse: Melvin Gerig (deceased). Parents: William and Anna Good Jennings (deceased). Memorial service: June 18 at Sarasota.
Glick, Esther Swartzendruber, 76, Goshen, Ind., died May 13. Spouse: Melvin Glick (deceased). Parents: Fred and Ella Augsburger Swartzendruber (deceased). Survivors: children Susan Miller, Melvin, Roger, Morris, Jonathan, Sam; 15 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 19 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Gotwals, Eva Derstine, 85, Souderton, Pa., died May 29. Spouse: Jacob Gotwals. Parents: John Landis and Katie Hagey Derstine Kulp (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Carroll, John, Clayton, Martha Postma, Paul; 12 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 2 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.
Janzen, Obera Ruth Eck, 64, Hesston, Kan., died May 15. Spouse: Arlo Janzen. Parents: Joseph and Eva Koehn Eck (deceased). Other survivors: children Steven, Robert, Mahlon, David, Eva Janzen Powell, Timothy, Curtis; 12 grandchildren, one great-grandchild, seven step-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 18 at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Landis, Elvin, 73, Lancaster, Pa., died May 12 of cancer. Spouse: Mary Jane Hershey Landis. Parents: Elvin and Sarah Root Landis (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Ann Warnick, David, Jan Kurtz, Ruth Thomas, Donna Landis Brubaker, Christine; 12 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 15 at Stumptown Mennonite Church, Bird in Hand, Pa.
Loewen, Harry, 85, Mountain Lake, Minn., died June 13. Spouses: (2nd) Mildred Rogers Loewen; (1st) Verna Schroeder Loewen (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Helena Dick Loewen (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Velma; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.
Miller, Aaron, 23, Shipshewana, Ind., died May 30 in an automobile accident. Parents: Brad and Cheryl Miller. Funeral: June 2 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.
Rittenhouse, Emma, 100, Souderton, Pa., died May 30. Spouse: Curtis Rittenhouse (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Amella Ruth (deceased). Survivors: children Ernest, Harold, Abram; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at Souderton.

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Ropp, Verna Gingerich, 76, Tavistock, Ont., died June 3. Spouse: Alfred Ropp. Parents: Samuel and Sarah Gascho Gingerich (deceased). Other survivors: children Elva Rush, Linda Hollands, Wayne, Howard, Mervin; 13 grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 6, at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Shetler, Jacob, 84, Glendale, Ariz., died April 15 of Parkinson's disease. Spouse: Olive Shetler. Parents: Jacob and Anna Guengerich Shetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Muriel Buller, Ronald; four grandchildren, one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 18 at Glendale.

Sommers, Iva Pearl, 96, Goshen, Ind., died May 28. Parents: Joseph and Mary Zook Sommers (deceased). Funeral: June 1 at Kokomo, Ind.

Steckle, Gerald, 52, Tavistock, Ont., died May 26. Spouse: Marjorie Erb Steckle. Parents: Asa (deceased) and Lillian McDowell Steckle. Other survivors: children Michael, Michelle Smith. Funeral: May 29 at Zurich (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Swartzendruber, Dorothy Swartzendruber, 84, Pigeon, Mich., died May 7. Spouse: Thomas Swartzendruber (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lydia Swartzendruber (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce Gunden, Lowell, Gary; 11 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 11 at Pigeon.

Troyer, Elva Hershberger Roth, 90, Kalona, Iowa, died May 9. Spouse: Raymond Troyer. Parents: John and Susan Rediger Hershberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Luora Leichty, Ila Hochstetler, Lila Byers; eight grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 13 at Wellman (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Raymon Glenn, 90, Wellman, Iowa, died June 3. Spouse: Ethel Yoder Troyer (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Anne Mueller Troyer (deceased). Survivors: children Gene, David, Gilbert, Dale, Janet Keim; eight grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Unzicker, Clara, 90, Eureka, Ill., died June 3. Spouse: Roy Unzicker (deceased). Parents: Valentine and Katherine Litwiller-Springer (deceased). Survivors: children Sam, Don, Fern DiNicola; 12 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 8 at Metamora (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

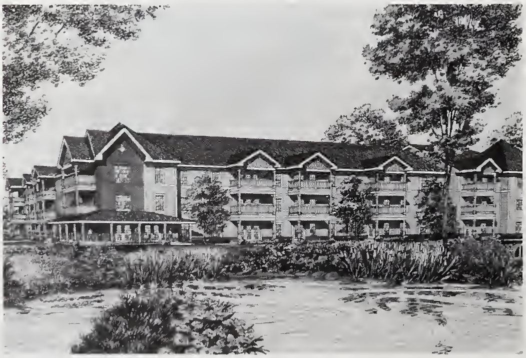
Weaver, Oscar, 89, Goshen, Ind., died June 6. Spouse: Bessie Hoover Weaver (deceased). Parents: Mahlon and Clara Weaver (deceased). Survivors: children Deloris Babcock, Truman, Melba Martin, Rodney, Leona Schmucker, Owen, Judy King; 15 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; Funeral: June 9 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Wyse, Marjory Werder, 84, Archbold, Ohio, died May 24. Spouse: Daniel Wyse (deceased). Parents: Elmer and Leah Short Werder (deceased). Survivors: children Marilyn Short, Martha, Marlene Beck, Carol Stuckey; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Stryker, Ohio.

Yommer, Cleamon, 89, Grantsville, Md., died April 21. Spouse: Freda Hershberger Yommer (deceased). Parents: Henry and Annie Handwerk Yommer (deceased). Survivors: son Edward; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 23 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Zehr, Walter, 68, Broadway, Va., died May 22 of cancer. Spouse: Pauline Bauman Zehr. Parents: Elias and Martha Widrick Zehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Edwin, Kathy Sue, Miriam Martin, Marcia Lehman, Phillip; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 26 at Cornerstone Church, Broadway.

Announcing Greencroft's newest senior living project.



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A place of healing

St. Louis' oldest Mennonite church has been serving its community for 40 years.

St. Louis' oldest Mennonite church was named for the healing pool in John 5, and it continues to work at being a place of healing for its members and community.

Officially organized 40 years ago, Bethesda Mennonite Church grew out of the earlier work of James and Rowena Lark, who moved into the Pruitt-Igoe Housing Project in St. Louis in late 1956 and organized a children's Sunday school.

In November 1957, Hubert and June Schwartzentruber came to take over the ministry from the Larks, who were retiring, and in May 1958, Bethesda was born with a membership of eight—three of whom were baptized, with five others joining on confession of faith. The following month, the congregation moved to its current location in inner-city St. Louis.

Throughout its history, Bethesda has kept up an active program for children and youth as well as adult Christian education. The church organized its first vacation Bible school in 1958 and has held one every year since, reaching hundreds of children from the surrounding, predominantly low-income, African-American community.

It has also been a location for short-term and long-term voluntary service. Bethesda has been a member of South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church since 1960 and has received assistance, in the form of money and volunteer labor, from SCC congregations in the initial remodeling and later expansion of its church building. The congregation has hosted high school and college groups coming for exposure to the inner city as well as voluntary service workers who stayed for months, a year, or, in the case of Ontario native Grace Knechtel, 20 years.

Current Bethesda pastor Rick Maclin assumed leadership in 1987. The Schwartzentrubers left in 1972; other pastors and pastoral teams served the church between then and 1987. Rick is a bivocational pastor who is also dean of the business program for Fontbonne College in St. Louis.

Rick grew up in Peoria, Ill., where he was trained in pastoral ministry at Star of Hope Full Gospel Baptist Church. Rick's brother Stan, then pastor of Joy Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation in Peoria (now pastored by yet another Maclin brother, Phil), drew Rick and his wife, Janace, and their family into the Mennonite church.

Janace, a public school teacher, and Jesse Dunigans, another Bethesda member, will be ordained for lay ministry this summer at Bethesda in Christian education and counseling and evangelism and "inreach" to current members, respectively, says Rick. He adds that the Christian education program for all ages, which Janace directs, is an important part of Bethesda's ministry.

"No one teaches Sunday school or leads Bible study without teacher training," Rick says. "This is a time when they can get together and talk about their lessons and any problems or questions they have."

Teacher training: The church also runs a series of classes under a program called Evangelical Teacher Training, which requires attending class sessions, completing homework and passing exams, with certificates available at four levels. This training helps equip church members to take on leadership roles in the congregation, Rick says. "People of all ages take the training—it enhances the church's growth."

Sunday worship is "semi-charismatic," Rick says. The church has active choir and youth programs. Preaching is "Word-oriented," he says, "teaching basic biblical principles and challenging the congregation to live by them."

Rick describes Bethesda as "declining in effectiveness" after the Schwartzentrubers left. But since the Maclins came, attendance has steadily increased. "Attendance was down to about a dozen," says Bethesda member Rosemarie Matsuda, who serves as resource person for the church's Sunday school program, called "Bible-centered activity." "Now we're back to 100 or so. The building is full and we're thinking about enlarging. Pastor Maclin is reaching a lot of people. He's very much into building up the family."

"Many who attend have moved out of the neighborhood but come here because it's the church they grew up in," Rick says. A number of members are professionals working in fields such as medicine and education.

"Central to Bethesda is … the stress on servanthood," he says. "If you are in a certain profession, it means you might have certain

Throughout its history, Bethesda has kept up an active program for children and youth as well as adult Christian education. The church has reached hundreds of children from the surrounding, predominantly low-income, African-American community.

A place of healing

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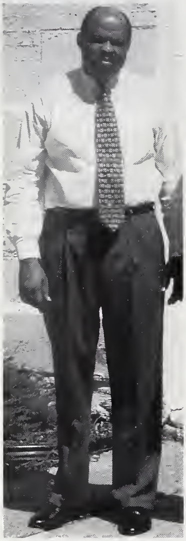

Melanie Zuercher

Central to Bethesda is ... the stress on servanthood. If you are in a certain profession, it means you might have certain kinds of gifts, not that you're higher than the others.

—Rick Maclin

kinds of gifts, not that you're higher than the others who are in the congregation."

"The church is now financially independent of South Central," Rosemarie says. "For many years, we were the main focus of home missions in the inner city [for the conference].

"Rick Maclin is working hard to make the church self-sufficient. He counsels people to stay in their jobs—he tells them all jobs have problems. He encourages prayer when there are problems."

Rosemarie and her family attended Bethesda in the mid-1960s. She was gone from the church and St. Louis for about 25 years, before returning in 1993 at age 69 (see story at right).

"This church's motto now is: 'Pick up your mat and walk,'" she says. "It's so different from earlier times, when the attitude [coming from the church] was: 'What do you need? We'll give it to you.'

"Times have changed. The church puts more emphasis on and gives more opportunity for education. Our goal is to enable people, to help them get the training to help themselves."

One way Rick sees of doing this is through conflict mediation and resolution, a growing interest of his. He has received some training and plans to get more at the Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center.

Rick is developing a workbook on a biblical approach to conflict resolution and has already taught some classes to people from four different St. Louis congregations. His dream is to have a seminar for churches on resolving conflict in the family. "I haven't seen many African-Americans involved in mediation, especially in the churches," he says. "Peace and reconciliation is our hope for solving inner-city violence. It's been our focus [at Bethesda] for vacation Bible school and throughout the year. I think people are looking for an alternative."

Peace center: He is excited about a peace center, similar to the one in Lombard, that is in the early planning stages by members from Bethesda and another St. Louis congregation, St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship. His vision for the center includes conflict resolution and mediation training for families, individuals, lay leaders and congregations.

St. Louis 99, the assembly of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church later this month, will be "a time of integration and growth, of getting in touch with the larger body," he says.

"A lot of people [in the wider St. Louis area] are going to be made aware of Mennonites [because of the convention]," he says. "It's going to raise [St. Louis Mennonites'] visibility. I hope we will be prepared to answer the questions and welcome people to our churches. Maybe that's the opportunity for a new church-planting effort."

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back t

For Rosemarie Matsuda, discovering Bethesda Mennonite Church was "hitting the jackpot." In the mid-1960s, Rosemarie, her husband and three young children were living in St. Louis. Her husband was the associate pastor at a Presbyterian church.

One Sunday, Rosemarie's husband, Ichi, was invited to preach at Bethesda by then-pastor Hubert Schwartzentruber. "He came home and told me, 'I've found a church where blacks and whites love each other,'" says Rosemarie. "I looked up Mennonites in the dictionary, and I said, 'Ichi, we hit the jackpot—they are pacifists.'"

Rosemarie and her husband, who are now divorced, met at what is now Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in the 1950s, as a result of their pacifist positions. "We were the only ones in our class to stand up for it," she says.

Their pacifism was born of experience. Both had survived World War II in countries under heavy fire. Ichi's father was killed in Japan when a bomb fell on the public baths.

"I was born in Akron, Ohio, in 1924, but I grew up in Brandenberg, near Berlin," says Rosemarie. "My family had a bakery there."

The war began in 1939. "We watched the planes flying over to Berlin and spent a lot of time in the basement, but most of the bombs fell on Berlin," she says. But one day she came home from work and found that the four-story house where she lived had been bombed and her parents buried in the basement. Later they were dug out alive.

She sent food during wartime, when it was generally scarce, to the family of one of the young female bakery apprentices. Later, Rosemarie found out that the girl's father was forced to witness executions of prisoners, who might have included two young Mennonite pacifists. She says, "It was very

> **One Sunday, Rick Maclin sat in the back of the sanctuary and grabbed my hand as I tried to slip out. That's how the contact began, and I started to return to humanity.**—*Rosemarie Matsuda*

Full circle Bethesda

hard to keep your hands clean."

Not long after Rosemarie's husband preached at Bethesda, the family moved next door to the church, where Ichi served for two years as assistant pastor. "I said to him, 'No organ I can stand—but no head covering for me,'" she says.

By the early 1970s, "he wanted to go to the Quakers," she says, and the family moved to the suburbs. The marriage broke up soon after.

"I continued to take my children to a Mennonite church, in Normal [Ill.]," she says. "We went once a month, even during gas rationing—the energy crisis in the '70s. I would drive 45 miles an hour and coast down hills to conserve gas."

> **Rosemarie spent the next 20 years raising her children, helping her oldest daughter get through medical school by baby-sitting and maintained contacts with Mennonites. Finally, in 1993, she fulfilled a dream that had stayed with her, returning to St. Louis.**

Rosemarie spent the next 20 years raising her children, helping her oldest daughter get through medical school by baby-sitting and maintained contacts with Mennonites. Finally, in 1993, she fulfilled a dream that had stayed with her, returning to St. Louis.

She moved into a house in the suburbs that she still owned and had rented out over the years. "I sat in that house for a year," she says. "There were all these books and papers, and I thought, I'll never get this all sorted out so I can move closer to the church. My memory was gone. I couldn't even remember the books of the Bible. I think I was depressed. I prayed, 'God, I know you don't want me to sit in this house. Can you get me out of here?' My prayers were always short and to the point."

So was God's answer. Wherever she lived, Rosemarie has reached out to neighborhood children, especially by giving them access to books. One evening, she walked a little girl home, leaving a log burning in a back room fireplace. "When I came back, the house was on fire," she says. The house did not burn down then. Rosemarie thinks a neighbor woman, after seeing some of the items thrown into the yard because of the first fire, came back later when Rosemarie was gone, stole them, threw gasoline on the floor and burned down the house to hide the theft.

"I lived for several months in private homes," she says. "I hoped to buy the house next door to the church, where my family used to live, but it was torn down. It was probably unstable." She did buy the lot, however, which she turned over to the church to use as a parking lot or playground area. Church members fixed up an apartment in the Bethesda building's third floor, where Rosemarie now lives, still reaching out to neighborhood children. She also serves as a volunteer church worker, as the volunteer resource person for Bethesda's "Bible-centered activity" program and the one who does "whatever falls through the cracks."

"Back when I was still living in the suburbs, I would come to church at Bethesda, but I'd always come in late and leave early, because 'I have to catch the bus,'" she says. "It was really so I wouldn't have to talk to anyone. One Sunday, Rick Maclin sat in the back of the sanctuary and grabbed my hand as I tried to slip out. That's how the contact began, and I started to return to humanity."

Melanie Zuercher

Rosemarie Matsuda

The articles on pages 15 to 21 were all written by Melanie Zuercher, who serves as News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

A

Shared leadership and diverse backgrounds characterize St. Lou

At 20, St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship is the middle child of the area's three Mennonite churches. Typical of many urban congregations whose members are mostly professionals, there's nothing much typical about it.

Like many other urban churches, this one began "as a social gathering, a once-a-month potluck," says current pastor Ed Springer. "People decided it would be nice to get together more often. Many of them worked at Edgewood Children's Center [in Webster Grove, Mo., a private facility for children with emotional and behavioral problems], where a Mennonite was the administrator, so they started out meeting in the center's gym. Their mascot was a black Lab that would sit in the center of the circle—legend has it he kept time to the music with his tail."

One of the congregation's early principles was never to own property as a church, and, says Ed, they never have. From the Edgewood gym, they moved a half mile to the Rock Hill Presbyterian Church. After about seven years, the congregation outgrew the Presbyterian sanctuary and went to a Lutheran church building. Home to an aging and dying congregation, that church closed four years later, around 1990.

"Our church came closest to buying at that point," says Ed. "We even made an offer on the building, but someone else outbid us." The fellowship now shares a facility (three buildings) belonging to Hope Presbyterian Church, a congregation about the same age.

"We always look for someplace close to the interstate," says Ed. "Our members come from a 60-mile radius, from as far away as Edwardsville, Ill., and Kahokia, Ill."

Ed describes his congregation as "transitional," a word other urban Mennonite pastors frequently use. "A lot are professional people in their 20s, 30s and 40s. They come for graduate school, or they work for large corporations and get transferred."

The St. Louis Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit (originally at Edgewood, now closer to downtown) is an important part of the congregation but is transitional by definition. "In [the current] group, almost everyone is on a committee," says Ed.

"Diversity of background" also accurately reflects St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship's makeup. Several continents are represented—in Ed's son-in-law, a German who originally came to St. Louis on an MVS assignment; in Fred and Sade Magares, the Tanzanian grandson of a Mennonite bishop married to a Nigerian; in an Irish family "who had Mennonite contacts in Dublin and looked us up when they came to St. Louis."

Priesthood of believers: Less than half the congregation comes from a Mennonite background, says Ed. "Sixty percent of us are non-Mennonite. The emphasis on peace, justice and reconciliation strikes a chord with city people. Some come from a Catholic or other liturgical background and are attracted by the priesthood of believers and community emphases. One active member, who's Presbyterian, came here thinking she was coming to a Presbyterian church but showed up an hour early [St. Louis Fellowship uses the sanctuary first on a Sunday morning], came to our service and has been here ever since."

Ed himself, though growing up in Hopedale, Ill., home to a Mennonite community, comes from a nonchurch background. He began attending a United Methodist church because his girlfriend sang in the choir, and he was baptized in that church. However, he ended up going to Bluffton (Ohio) College, because a Mennonite neighbor who was on the board of trustees convinced him to attend. "I was converted to pacifism at Bluffton," he says.

The congregation now has 60 covenanted members and an average weekly attendance of 75 to 100 adults and children. An ordained minister in the United Methodist Church, Ed (who married Esther Schmidt from Goessel, Kan., not his Methodist girlfriend) has served Mennonite churches in Hopedale; Markham, Ill.; Hillsboro, Kan.; and Albany, Ore., and is St. Louis Fellowship's first full-time pastor.

However, he says, "it's very much a shared leadership model. There is a worship planning committee that draws on a wide variety of talented people. My only role in worship is to preach—other people do other parts of the service. We try to be inclusive of all ages, through things like a children's story and getting youth and children to pass the offering plates."

Much of Ed's time goes into keeping up with his widely scattered congregation as well as the variety of ministries in which members are involved. As with other urban congrega-

> **The emphasis on peace, justice and reconciliation strikes a chord with city people. Some come from a Catholic or other liturgical background and are attracted by the priesthood of believers and community emphases.**
>
> *—Ed Springer*

diversE congregation

nnonite Fellowship.

tions, service and outreach are important, and, because the congregation has been in several locations in its history, projects are scattered across the St. Louis metro area.

One member is on the board of Webster-Rock Hill Ministries, an agency that provides services for low-income families, including food and clothing banks, legal assistance and after-school and summer programs for children. The church hosts high school and college Service Venture groups that come for weeklong service projects.

St. Louis Fellowship is part of the Congregation-Offender Partner Enterprise, in which "we walk with inmates during their first year out of prison," says Ed. "We provide some financial assistance, such as buying a bus pass so the man can get to work. Someone has lunch with him once a week. People in the congregations who participate are trained to work with former inmates. We've had a 50 percent success rate so far—two of the men made it, two didn't."

The MVS workers who are part of St. Louis Fellowship teach at Edgewood, work with Habitat for Humanity and help run Plowsharing Crafts, a longtime congregational project.

Peace worker: Plowsharing Crafts, which is similar to a Mennonite Central Committee Ten Thousand Villages store and carries many TTV craft items, started about 13 years ago, when an MVS worker, Richard Howard-Willms, "did a lot of linking with peace and justice groups in the area in his assignment as peace worker," says Ed. "He had a vision for helping the poor through an economic project like self-help crafts." The store keeps expanding and recently moved into its third storefront, near Washington University.

A recent peace worker, MVS worker Mark Hochstedler (see story, page 20), whose term ended in February, spent most of his time doing legwork for a peace center that St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship and Bethesda Mennonite Church dream of starting—a place that will provide peace resources, peace education and conflict mediation and resolution training and services for individuals and congregations.

Ed hopes that St. Louis 99 will result in "visibility for Mennonites in the St. Louis metro area," and also that Mennonites will "begin to use the press to become more visible in our communities."

He believes the convention can benefit his congregation. "We'll be able to get to know brothers and sisters in the larger church whom we don't get to see very often, to spotlight the fact that we are part of something bigger." St. Louis Fellowship is dually affiliated with Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church. The nearest cluster of Mennonite churches is three hours away, in Champaign-Urbana, Ill.

Ed has a vision for church planting. "There are 2.7 million people in St. Louis and only three Mennonite churches," he says. "It's hard for me to justify people driving all the way from Illinois to west St. Louis. It would be good to have a Mennonite presence in other parts of St. Louis, as well as strengthening and supporting what is already here. What Mennonites have to offer St. Louis is living out the themes of peace and justice and following the teachings of Jesus."

> What Mennonites have to offer St. Louis is living out the themes of peace and justice and following the teachings of Jesus.
>
> *—Ed Springer*

Melanie Zuercher

ST. LOUIS MENNONITE
FELLOWSHIP
Worship 8:45
Sunday School 10:00a.m.

Transitional and diverse congregation: Pastor Ed Springer in front of the church's sign

Bringing peace to the city

When Mark Hochstedler started his Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) term in January 1998, his assignment was "peace worker," but it took a while to figure out what that meant. In the meantime, he volunteered in an after-school program for elementary school-aged children.

"I was amazed by the 'eye-for-an-eye' attitude," says Mark. "I broke up a fight between two kids and was talking to one afterward who said his mom had told him if anyone picked on him to fight back."

A year before entering MVS, a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Missions of the Mennonite Church, Mark attended the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Calcutta.

If the peace center can help people move toward healthier ways of resolving conflict, the message of Christ will have become relevant to many in St. Louis.—*Mark Hochstedler*

"I became very interested in peace and justice work [after going to Calcutta]," he says. "I saw for the first time what I had only read about in books like *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*—masses of people, living in poverty. I need emotional attachment to an idea in order to be motivated."

These kinds of experiences helped move him into what became his main focus in his MVS assignment: working to lay the groundwork for a peace center in St. Louis.

"A personal search for me is how to make peace relevant to any person I might pass on the sidewalk," he says.

Meanwhile, two of the St. Louis Mennonite pastors—Rick Maclin of Bethesda Mennonite Church and Ed Springer of St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, the host congregation for St. Louis MVS—were talking about their dream for developing a peace center in St. Louis.

"The overall vision has been around a while—wanting more than just a peace worker to get St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship involved in some kind of sustainable [peace and justice-oriented] outreach," says Mark.

The vision and purpose statement for the center says it will "create innovative methods of education and empowerment in order that the life-giving Way of Christ may be recognized as relevant and needed within our society and the greater world."

Conflict mediation: The main ways of working toward that purpose will be through conflict mediation, particularly in congregations and schools. The peace center dream includes training adults and children in Mennonite and other congregations in conflict resolution skills, gathering conflict resolution curricula that may be marketed to both public and private schools, and providing active support and further development for restorative justice programs already existing in St. Louis.

Rick Maclin also sees neighborhood and family mediation skills training as an essential service the center can provide. "Peace and reconciliation are our hope for solving inner-city violence," he says.

The peace center vision received a boost in the form of a "Spread the Peace" grant awarded to St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship by the Mennonite Church's Peace and Justice Committee. The St. Louis Peace Center also received 1998 Christmas Sharing Funds as part of a broad-based effort to increase Mennonite witness in St. Louis.

Mark's role included legwork to help lay the center's foundation. He wrote to other peace centers around the country to find out how they were started and how they were based, and to ask for samples of curricula they used to teach peace. He went to visit the closest Mennonite peace center, in Lombard, Ill.

"The Lombard Peace Center focuses on nonviolent conflict resolution education," says Mark. "The staff offers a variety of workshops for congregational, school and business conflict resolution. The center existed for 13 or 14 years, working out of Lombard Mennonite Church, before it had its own office—most workshops are offered [on the church site]. They now have two full-time staff and a part-time office person and are a financially self-supporting, nonprofit organization."

That kind of model makes it easier to envision a similar center in St. Louis. "Eventually, it would be good to have a physical peace center, but right now the focus [is to be] on getting into congregations to build that aspect of our programming. Then, when time and energy become available, the center staff will go in the direction of providing conflict resolution education for schools," Mark says.

Networking: Mark also spent a lot of his time trying to develop a network with others in the St. Louis area who have been involved in mediation, such as James and Kathy McGinnis, best known as co-coordinators of the Parenting for

Peace and Justice Network, and some professors at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. "I hope to have a focus group from the community [to help develop the center]," Mark says.

"Some professors have tried to get community mediation going, and it has failed," he says. "It's been interesting to try to figure out why. For example, sometimes people come with preconceived notions about the motives of the mediators—they look at them as judge rather than facilitator." One important staff role for a mediation-focused peace center will be educating the public on the function of a mediator.

An immediate challenge for the center's supporters will be finding another MVS worker to continue the development process after Mark's term, which ended in February, as well as a director who can start implementing some of the program plans.

"A lot of peace centers work in advocacy—[which tends to mean] against something," says Mark. "Advocacy is important, but it's also important to show what we're working for, what we're working toward.

"My goal is to present something tangible that people can relate to. Nonviolent ways of dealing with church conflicts, violence in schools and violent behavior in children are [fairly new]. The infectious belief that violence is the best way to resolve conflict has swept over our nation and the world like a plague. I believe that many people recognize the idiocy of that but are trapped by not being exposed to any other way of conflict resolution.

"If the peace center can help people move toward more peaceful and healthy ways of resolving conflict, the message of Christ will have become relevant to many in St. Louis. There are not a lot of mediation initiatives here now. We're planting a seed now that we hope will eventually take root and grow."

Katie Marshall

My goal is to present something tangible people can relate to.

—Mark Hochstedler

More than enough

Ethiopian congregation in St. Louis provides full-time ministry.

For Yeshitela Mengistu, the church he leads in St. Louis is part of a larger vision for ministry. Yeshitela is pastor of St. Louis' youngest Mennonite body, Redeemer of the World Evangelical Church, an Ethiopian congregation affiliated with the Illinois Conference of the Mennonite Church.

"I accepted the Lord when I was 14," says Yeshitela, "but I didn't learn about Mennonites until I was employed by the [Ethiopian] government as a public school teacher and assigned to Nazreth, where there is a significant Mennonite presence, including a hospital and Bible academy."

Yeshitela came 13 years ago to the United States from Ethiopia, where he was a leader of the Miserete Kristos Church (the Ethiopian Mennonite Church) to study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and Eastern College in St. Davids, Pa. He also worked as a church planter under Eastern Mennonite Missions, the mission arm of Lancaster Conference of the Mennonite Church.

Part of his job involved traveling all over the United States and Canada to visit Ethiopian congregations. A contact from one of those visits, he says, led to the invitation to plant a church in St. Louis.

"There are about 1,000 Ethiopians in the St. Louis area," he says, "and even those are divided along tribal lines. Any political unrest or upheaval in Ethiopia is reflected here."

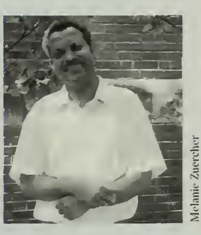
The Redeemer church began with about 12 members in January 1995 and is now "up to 50, plus 15 children," says its pastor. The members comprise some professional people but are mostly cab drivers and manual laborers.

"We were looking for a church that would let us meet in its building free of charge," says Yeshitela. "One of our members, who drives a cab, went by the Hanley Road Baptist Church in University City one day and decided he would stop in and ask about using it. The pastor said OK."

The group of rooms that Redeemer uses stays busy throughout the week, says Yeshitela. In addition to a Sunday worship service that might run three hours, there are prayer services on Monday and Thursday, discipleship and Bible study classes on Wednesday and choir practice on Saturday.

"We don't adhere to any one denominational line," says Yeshitela. "We have a charismatic worship. We believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit—that the Holy Spirit is active in a tangible way, to be seen and experienced. Our worship brings the reality of God into our hearts and the words of God alive."

The congregation also retains its interest in the country of origin. "We send money to Ethiopia to support ministries there," says Mengistu. "God is blessing us—we are poor, but we have more than enough." In fact, they are able to support Mengistu full time.


Melanie Zuercher

We have a charismatic worship. We believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit—that the Holy Spirit is active in a tangible way, to be seen and experienced.

—Yeshitela Mengistu

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a ***claims representative*** (relevant experience in property and/or auto loss adjusting desirable). Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., Attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Ten Thousand Villages Tucson** is seeking a ***full-time manager and part-time assistant manager*** for a new nonprofit, alternative trade retail store in Tucson, Ariz. For an application and information packet, please send a letter of interest to Ten Thousand Villages Tucson, 2917 N. West Plaza Drive, Tucson, AZ 85716.

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, Lancaster, Pa., accredited K-8, is seeking teacher applicants for the following full-time positions: ***middle school science, middle school language arts*** and ***part-time 4th- and 5th-grade teachers***. Beginning August 1999.

  Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities. Location: East Petersburg or Millersville, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time ***community living adviser*** positions available in various group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking an ***equity analyst*** to monitor the MMA stock universe and equity portfolios for decision-making purposes using a quantitative discipline. Qualified applicants will have an undergraduate degree in finance, economics, computer science or mathematics; spreadsheet and database experience; participation in the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) program. Investment experience is preferred but not required. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking qualified candidates for the following full-time positions:

  Director of finance: Responsibilities include budget development, fiscal management and reporting, employee benefits, facility management and long-range planning.

  Guidance counselor: Responsibilities include counseling students, conferencing with parents and teachers, and teaching guidance themes.

  Penn View is affiliated with the Mennonite churches in southeastern Pennsylvania and serves 560 students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196.

- **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp** needs ***volunteers!*** This summer and fall, RMMC will embark on a major building project as part of its 10-year plan, culminating in 2002, the 50th anniversary of the camp. We hope to break ground the middle of May on a 3,460-sq. ft. addition to the dining lodge. It will include a new dining area, handicapped accessible bathrooms, a staff lounge, offices and nurse's station. Additionally, the kitchen will be renovated. We will have a project supervisor on site through the summer and fall but will rely on volunteers to complete the work. Housing is available.

  Please contact one of the following volunteer coordinators to schedule your work time: Glen Stehman, 316-327-4609 (Hesston, Kan.); Leon Stutzman, 303-797-3551 (Denver); and Verlin Kuhns, 719-384-7304 (La Junta, Colo.).

- **Walnut Hills Retirement Community**, Walnut Creek, Ohio, seeks a ***director of nursing***, an opportunity for an RN with gifts/interest in management and older adults to join the team at Walnut Hills by fall 1999. The 102-resident nursing home, established in 1971, is owned and managed by Mennonites and the 150 associates reflect the Christian values of this community.

  Contact David Miller, pres/adm, P.O. Box 127, Walnut Creek, OH 44687; 330-893-3200; email whills@tusco.net

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–Matt Hamsher, 1999 M.Div.
Walnut Creek Mennonite Church,
Walnut Creek, Ohio

"MY SEMINARY EXPERIENCE was one of empowerment. It strengthened me, affirmed my God-given gifts and deepened my knowledge and understanding of God and the church."

–Donna Mast, 1997 M.A.C.L.
Kingview Mennonite Church,
Scottdale, Pa.

The implications of a Mennonite Church U.S.

by Everett J. Thomas

In a few weeks, delegates to St. Louis 99 will vote on a proposal to create separate, national churches in the United States and Canada. If the delegates approve this plan, we will have a new church in Canada and a new church in the United States that includes Puerto Rico. Still to be resolved is how these two new countrywide churches will form partnerships across the border.

Most of the attention leading up to this vote has been focused on the urgent matter of membership. However, an even more important issue has received little attention: What will it mean for our delegates to create the Mennonite Church U.S. There are at least three important ramifications for such a change: (1) new relationships with other national churches that are members of the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) family, (2) new expectations for those of us who are citizens of a lone superpower and (3) new assumptions for a national church to engage the U.S. government.

For example, some MWC sisters and brothers in the Southern Hemisphere have wanted to talk to U.S. Mennonites and other Anabaptist-related Christians for years about actions taken by our government. After returning from mission work in Colombia, Jack Suderman, a leader in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, reports he was often asked questions about the U.S. government. He notes that our current, binational structure leaves U.S Mennonites "structurally inaccessible to the rest of the world; there is no place to send a letter." As we begin the new millennium with one superpower in the world, with a new Mennonite Church U.S., sisters and brothers around the world will have access to us.

A second reality that will be difficult to avoid after July is the matter of citizenship in the world's remaining superpower. The current Mennonite Church (which I know best) has pretty much kept its head down for several centuries as the "quiet in the land." However, our new national church will have a growing number of members involved in many areas of commerce, public policy, elected office and service industries. It will be increasingly difficult for us to claim we are in this country but not of it.

Our tax dollars pay for cruise missiles as well as refugee relief. As U.S. taxpayers, we work the first several months of each year to pay a tax bill that produces sophisticated weaponry. Consequently, we have a responsibility to speak to our government about how those dollars are spent.

The issues before us as U.S. citizens are complicated. Not only do we speak to actions taken by our country around the world but we also must be vigilant about actions that are not taken. What if our country does not help change a situation when our country is the only player who could do so? This is especially problematic if we wash our hands of a situation because there is no compelling economic or national defense incentive for us.

A third significant issue for us to consider is related to the first two: How can our new national church become a conscience for our country? Might there be some new role for us in the next millennium as a faithful voice of dissent? Might the formation of this new Mennonite Church U.S. spark us to consider unprecedented engagement with our leaders and our government?

To accept such a role requires that we understand the great power and authority that belong to this country. We swim in this power and authority whether we like it or not. So perhaps the issue is whether or not we will learn how to be stewards of this great entitlement.

What would it mean for our tiny national denomination of 135,000 people (U.S and Puerto Rico) to accept bravely the power and resources that are ours as citizens of this country and discern ways we can influence the course of history?

Our citizenship in the United States can be understood as a resource to be used for God's purposes and the world church. Remember the power the apostle Paul wielded as a Roman citizen? What would it mean for our tiny national denomination of 135,000 people (United States and Puerto Rico) to accept bravely the power and resources that are ours as citizens of this country and discern ways we can influence the course of history?

To whom much is given much is expected; those of us who will be part of this new U.S. communion have been given much. I hope that as we move toward the vote in St. Louis this month, those who carry decision-making responsibilities are reflecting on what it will mean to create a Mennonite Church U.S.

Everett J. Thomas, Goshen, Ind., is president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

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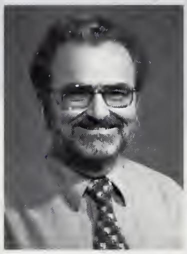

J. Lorne Peachey

St. Louis 99:

Another defining moment for North American Mennonites

I still remember my goose bumps at Wichita 95 during the last day of business. Immediately after the delegates of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) voted in separate sessions to merge, they got together and sang: "Here in this place, new light is streaming, / now is the darkness vanished away. / See, in this space, our fears and our dreamings, / brought here to you in the light of this day" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* 6).

Now it's always dangerous to guess what history will decide about North American Mennonites at the end of the 20th century. But I suspect this vote and this song will be noted as defining moments for us. So will the fact that at the same assembly we agreed on a common confession of faith and a joint vision statement.

It was hard not to leave Wichita 95 euphoric. Though there were questions about what it would all mean, there was more enthusiasm for new beginnings. Much of that enthusiasm continued two years later when GCs and MCs agreed, in Winnipeg and Orlando respectively, to consider coming under one structure when they next met—at St. Louis 99.

"Here in this place, new light is streaming, now is the darkness vanished away. See, in this space, our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day."

St. Louis 99 is now upon us. Will this be another defining moment for North American Mennonites in our quest to become one?

As the story on page 8 outlines, delegates to this meeting will be faced with a host of resolutions to make happen what they asked for in 1995 and 1997. The first resolution will be to establish separate but cooperating bodies in Canada and the United States. This is a new concept that the delegates did not even have two years ago. But it's a plan integration planners believe best in today's North American culture.

If delegates at St. Louis agree, then those from Canada will work at transforming their current structures into Mennonite Church Canada. U.S. delegates will work with resolutions to create a new Mennonite Church U.S. Both will consider how to form partnerships across the border.

And then there is the issue of membership. Canadians say they are ready to vote on guidelines that will give final authority on membership to area conferences. U.S. delegates will get the same guidelines for "a first reading"; leaders believe the U.S. part of the church needs more time for study and discussion before taking a vote on membership.

It is this issue more than any other that has put a damper on integration enthusiasm. Questions abound: Can we move ahead if the membership question isn't settled? What happens if Canada and the United States come up with separate membership guidelines? And, the question I'm asked most often: Are we going to make it?

As the editor of a publication that has already been through merger, I'm likely the last person who should be asked that question. Of course we'll make it; we have to. If not, life could become quite difficult for me and my staff!

But the question is not how difficult our life will be or whether we'll make it. The real questions are: Was the decision to merge in 1995—and the almost unanimous affirmation to move forward in 1997—a movement of the Spirit? Were there forces more human at work among us? Or has there been a change in the Spirit's mind?

How we answer those questions will determine how we go about discerning other issues both during and after St. Louis. Can we continue on the path we began four years ago without having all our questions answered or our plans in place? Is the vision for what God is calling us to be and do clear enough to supersede our differences and our disagreements?

Four years ago we said we wanted to merge because we believed (1) the Spirit wanted us to demonstrate that unity is possible in our world and (2) integration would enhance our witness to the good news of salvation, reconciliation and peace through Jesus Christ. I believe God would have us reaffirm that vision during St. Louis 99. I believe God calls us to sing again, "Here in this place, new light is streaming. …"—*jlp*

the Mennonite

July 13, 1999

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

War and peace

Perry Bush was surprisingly behind the times in his description of the current world situation, political thought and what constitutes modern warfare in his explanation of why Mennonites (should) feel awkward about celebrating a national holiday that has a martial subtext ("Christian Propriety and the Fourth of July," June 22).

Bush states that we are living in the era of "modern, total war." The concept of total war ended in 1949 when the Soviet Union obtained the bomb. Total war is no longer an accurate description of the way modern wars are fought. Rather, developed nations practice what some call "Nintendo war" in which we launch guided missiles and bombs from the air and sea, and then we view the results on the news the following evening. As a result of the carnage and destruction of World War II and the fear of nuclear holocaust during the Cold War, national leaders (not to mention the citizens of those nations) recognize that total war is too costly in lives and material and that nuclear deterrence is simply insane. Our leaders are very conscious of the awfulness of war and violence and are actively working for a more peaceful world.

The fact that efforts are being made toward demilitarization and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, that the United States and its allies bomb specific buildings in a city using guided bombs, that international investigators are treating Kosovo as a crime scene and that Serbian president Milosevic has been indicted as a war criminal testify to the changing tide. Mennonites may not agree with the use of military force, but they should at least understand the rationale and motivation behind its use, especially when, as American citizens, they have a more direct means than protest to effect change. We should not fall prey to ignorance and cynicism but rather take advantage of our democratic system to demand further support for government actions that lead to peace.—*Ryan Stoy, Green Lane, Pa.*

Why must we be so judgmental of people who are or have been a part of our military establishments or be hesitant to celebrate civil holidays that commemorate our freedoms? North American Mennonites' obsession with peace strikes me as being a bit hypocritical, since we are the beneficiaries of freedoms that few people on earth have ever enjoyed. Whether it's ordained by God or man, freedom is almost always purchased by bloodshed. Even Jesus used that method to gain our spiritual freedom.

Which do we value, peace or freedom? To those of us who have never lived under the oppression of tyranny, there seems to be a lack of appreciation for the freedoms that we take for granted. Must we now be so arrogant as to show our disdain for those who sacrificed even to the point of death so that we can enjoy these freedoms?—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

Hospitals' cure for integration

As negotiations abut integration between the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Chuch are extended yet another two years, I wonder if we might learn anything from hospitals with different denominational traditions that have merged in this decade.

I returned in May from a conference for CEOs of hospital foundations of the Voluntary Hospital Association. What was noteworthy was that more than 70 percent of the institutions represented had experienced a merger within the past five years. Often the mergers brought together hospitals with very different religious traditions, such as Jewish-Christian or Seventh Day Adventist-Episcopal.

"What Was Learned From These Mergers" was presented by Dan Wilford, president of Memorial Hermann Healthcare System. One of the keys to success was completing merger efforts within six months. Wilford pointed out that after that time, the risk of failure increased with every passing month. Why? The promise and possibilities of a shared future and mission gave way to the problems and sticking points that clung to past traditions. Momentum was lost, and those ventures either broke up or had more trouble meshing traditions.

Is there a message here for integration? I am increasingly skeptical of the wisdom of drawing out the timetable for integration into the next millennium. It will not make the sticking points go away. To the contrary, as we spend our time on the squeaking wheels, we lose the enthusiasm we once sensed for what we were not yet but dared to become in a shared Mennonite vision and mission for the new millennium.—*Harold J. Schultz, Kansas City, Mo.*

Commendation and criticism

I have been reading a fairly steady stream of critical letters to Readers Say about *The Mennonite*'s editing decisions. From the wide

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theMennonite

Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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readers say

range in the subject matter as well as points of view offered in the criticisms, it seems to me that you are probably doing a very good job and, more to the point, an impossible one. Few of us, I am certain, would be up to the task.

It got me to wondering, if you were to write a Readers Say letter about your thoughts and feelings on your editing, what it would say. It would be an important letter for all of us people of peace to read.

For whatever small comfort it offers, I'll leave you with this: "Don't worry about the hostile, the angry, the selfish and demanding; worry about the others who give you comfort and keep you from prayer" (Rumi).—*Christine Thomson, Phoenixville, Pa.*

We want to commend the staff and editors of *The Mennonite* for providing us with news of interest. We especially appreciate the balanced writing and reporting of controversial issues within the Mennonite denomination. With God's grace, we will achieve "unity in essentials, liberty in nonessentials and love in all things."—*Earl and Marilyn Rose, Iowa City, Iowa*

I know you are working very hard at the new publication, but I must echo Evan Bontrager (Readers Say, June 15): Please bring back a strong spiritual teaching. As a former subscriber to *Gospel Herald*, I would immediately read it from cover to cover. Since the integration, I read out of a feeling of obligation, in case I might miss something, but come away each week wondering why exhortation has lost out to discussion, observation and general reporting. Any periodical can do these things. Please don't dump the call to faithful discipleship in the real world.—*Ann E. Detweiler, Albany, Ore.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

We trust congregations to discern faithfully how best to be present … for worship.

—Rod Stafford, "The ABCs of Mennonite Worship," June 15

Language and worship

I read with interest "The ABCs of Mennonite Worship" (June 15) until I read, "If we weren't so doggone humble … " What? My Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, copyright 1995, defines the profane word of "doggone" as a "euphemism for God damn or damn." Is the writer attempting to degrade the Christian grace of humility? Where was your proofreader? Did someone overlook your editorial guidelines?

Yesterday I saw this word in our denomination's weekly publication; this morning I happened to spot it in our daily newspaper. Will *The Mennonite* be classified as secular?—*Edna Mast, Manheim, Pa.*

"The ABCs of Mennonite Worship" is a wonderful overview of what we do. I made copies to give to my friends when I try to explain what Mennonites are about.—*Corinne Hanna Diller, Houston*

Constant principles, changing applications

Regarding inclusive ministry, the Anabaptists do not view Scripture as many other religious groups do. To us, revelation is progressive. This view is in contrast to a flat-book view of the Bible.

Many things happened in the Old Testament for which God did not take responsibility or delight in. His love for an immature people caused him to permit behaviors that had no divine sanction. We are still a people of God in a process of understanding change and growth. The revelatory process through the leading of the Spirit continued into the New Testament era. God was not happy with everything that happened in the early church and even among his close-knit group of disciples. The Spirit is still working with the people of God to make them a refined, spiritual and mature body of faith. Let us remember that a doctrine's worst enemy can be its most fanatical adherent.

The essentials of salvation—the deity of Christ, his death, his resurrection, the gift of the Holy Spirit and Christ's coming again—are the basis of faith and spiritual wholeness of the people of God. Patterns of church administration found in Scripture may be classed in a different category. Are they intentional, relevant to the times and adaptable? The Holy Spirit uses us where we are and in ways often beyond our comprehension. He enlarges divine revelation as he wills.

Paul wrestled with the concept of male-female relationships. With women interrupting the study of Scripture by the men, Paul instructed, "Learn at home." This set the pace, then, for spiritual involvement for women. Christ freed women from early cultural restrictions. His Spirit today is leading dedicated men and women to new areas of commitment and service.

The basic principles of the Word of God never change; the applications may. God's concern is that the gospel be preached. He has used many people we might reject. To our amazement, the venture has been successful. May God be patient with us as we together attempt to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church today.—*A. Don Augsburger, Lancaster, Pa.*

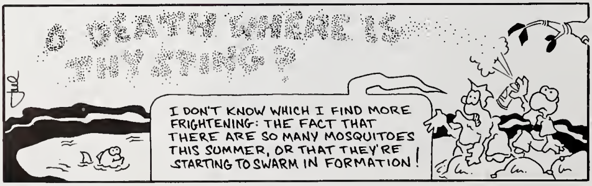
Ecumenical enthusiasm

Chad Mullet Bauman's call to join the ecumenical movement (Speaking Out, June 1) is a needed reminder that we Mennonites are a tiny branch on God's family tree. I agree that wider participation in the world Christian community would give us a "fuller understanding of who God is" and a deeper appreciation of the ways Christ is manifest in his universal body.

There are networks of Christian fellowship and cooperative action in addition to the World Council of Churches. The most dynamic growing edges of the church are often represented in so-called evangelical movements such as the World Evangelical Fellowship. A small denomination may not feel it would be good stewardship to be full participants of both groups, but at least we should establish what relationships we can that will demonstrate our commitment to Christ's own deep longing and prayer for the unity of believers, which Jesus suggested is a prerequisite for mission (John 17).

Moving past our pride in being a "third way," our confused ambivalence about ethnicity and faith, and our current preoccupation with the organizational dilemmas of integration may enable us to take our place in Christ's global church. We have much to give and much to learn.—*Edgar Metzler, Goshen, Ind.*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


O DEATH WHERE IS THY STING?
I DON'T KNOW WHICH I FIND MORE FRIGHTENING: THE FACT THAT THERE ARE SO MANY MOSQUITOES THIS SUMMER, OR THAT THEY'RE STARTING TO SWARM IN FORMATION!

Annali Smucker

Life study with obstinate questionings, or the sweat bee

by Jeff Gundy

The world's grown half over and through
the steel buildings. It's slowly taking back
the pile of debris from the old house in town,

the one we half-burned and half-buried
hoping nobody would notice. One wet spring
and the world is half over all our paths,

green enough to hide a horde of mayflies,
beetles, mosquitoes, on and on. The world
is red clover, milkweed, goldenrod, foxtail,

this loose and inept catalogue could go on.
If I were in charge I'd lose the flies
first thing, I'd keep the dragonflies and

whatever didn't bite through my socks or whine
in my ear. God knows his own. But now I think
God is a catbird, poised on a limb as I am

on the fence, balanced but not quite easy,
trying to sing. Unless God is the swallow
blazing past almost too sudden to see,

savoring deft wings and sharp beak and the soft
delicious bugs. Unless God is the muskrat,
dazed and easy in the slippery mud. Unless

I'm a fool, and God is elsewhere, out, beyond,
behind, and all the bushes hide is dirt,
and even the new bird singing so firm and clean

is only bird, and the ones that answer too.
I'm a fool but I think God is the fat groundhog
that hunched off through the grass, the goldfinch

that skipped into the fine web of leaves
and branches, the sweat bee that followed me
half the way home, trying to nest in my hair.

Jeff Gundy teaches English at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

At the MKC Bible school

by Stephen Penner

In this lion's land
    source of the blue Nile
    twelve men lie on mattresses
    to await a new day
    of Old Testament study.
They have left
    farm and family,
    the laughter of children,
    the taste and touch of village,
    for this temporary Addis Ababa home.
Here they find
    a library
    with one shelf,
    a classroom
    with a single light.
Their faces beam
    remembering Abraham
    traveling with his tent
    southward, to the green Negeb,
    and sister Ruth,
    leaving her Moabite home
    to cling to Naomi
    among the golden barley fields of Judah.

Stephen Penner lives in Reedley, Calif.

**MKC is the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia.*

Marilyn Nolt

The origins of the Bible

Christianity originated within Judaism—Jesus and his disciples were Jews, and the Old Testament books were their Scriptures. The first believers in Jesus as Messiah in that large church in Jerusalem we read about in Acts were all Jews, and these were their Scriptures.

The Bible is not a simple book—it is not even a single book. It contains writings of many individuals who lived over centuries of time. Who compiled these books? Who brought them together into a single volume? The following is the first in a three-part series on the origins and message of the Bible.

by John Miller

When we look at the Bible as a book, we notice immediately that it has two distinct parts: (1) a block of books, most originally written in Hebrew, traditionally known as the Old Testament, and (2) a smaller block of books originally written in Greek, known as the New Testament.

This gives the impression that the Bible was compiled in two stages: first, the Hebrew books were assembled, then the books in Greek were added. This impression is confirmed when we read the New Testament and notice on almost every page quotations from Old Testament books. But these are never referred to as "Old Testament" but as "Scripture" or "Holy Scriptures."

This suggests that, for the New Testament writers, the Scriptures we call the "Old Testament" were already in existence and revered as their Scriptures or Bible.

The law of Moses: Occasionally these older Scriptures are referred to in the New Testament as "the Law and the Prophets," or "the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms" (Luke 24:44). Jews today still refer to their Scriptures in these terms.

On my desk is a Jewish Bible with the word "Tanakh" on its title page. Tanakh is an acronym made up of the Hebrew words "Torah" (law), "Nevi'im" (prophets) and "Kethuvim" (writings). The Tanakh has the very same books that are in our Old Testament, although differently arranged.

Why do Christian Bibles contain all the Jewish Scriptures? Because Christianity originated within Judaism—Jesus and his disciples were Jews, and these were their Scriptures. The first believers in Jesus as Messiah in that large church in Jerusalem we read about in Acts were all Jews, and these were their Scriptures.

Then how did it happen that New Testament writings were added to these older Scriptures to make the Bible we have today? This did not happen all at once.

Jews who came to believe in Jesus as Messiah shared what they remembered about him. These memories circulated and were eventually written down and shared when Christians gathered, along with letters from leaders of this movement. At first, no one would have thought of adding these writings to that older body of sacred Scriptures, any more than we today would add the writings of our leaders to the Bible we have. When did this happen?

Marcion controversy: During the second half of the second century, an enormously divisive controversy erupted in the Gentile Christian churches. This controversy was precipitated by a church leader named Marcion, who concluded from reading Paul's letters that the God of grace and love revealed through Jesus Christ could not be the same God as spoken of in the Jewish Scriptures.

There are two Gods, said Marcion, the God of law who created the world and the God of love revealed for the first time in Jesus Christ to save us for the eternal, uncreated world beyond this one, which will soon be destroyed.

Marcion challenged the Gentile churches to get rid of their Jewish Scriptures and replace them with a new set. This new Bible should

Bible: from Greek word "biblia," meaning "scrolls" or "books"
Canon: books regarded as sacred or normative
Codex: book, as opposed to scroll, first appearing about A.D. 100
Scripture: from Latin "a writing"
Testament: covenant or witness

contain the Gospel of Luke and 10 letters of Paul (with those parts removed that didn't fit Marcion's theology) and nothing more.

Marcion launched a crusade to get the churches to adopt his new Bible. He was so successful, it is believed, that for a time in the late second century, Marcionite Christians outnumbered all others.

The Christian Bible was created in response to this crisis. A major role was taken by Irenaeus, a leader of churches in Lyons, France, who published a five-volume treatise titled *Against Heresies*. In it he carefully demonstrated that the church's oldest apostolic writings and teachings, including those of Paul, all bear testimony to the same God spoken of in Israel's Scriptures.

The God whom Jesus addressed as father is not a new God but the same as the God of Israel. Christians believe in God the Father, creator of heaven and earth.

But, Irenaeus wrote, we also believe in Jesus Christ as revealed in four Gospels, the book of Acts, the writings of the apostles (not just Paul) and the book of Revelation. So, faced with Marcion's challenge, Irenaeus and others felt the time had come to create a uniquely Christian Bible, one in which the church's full apostolic Scriptures would be added to the full Israelite Scriptures which, prior to Marcion, had been regularly read in all the churches.

Thus it came about that the churches opposing Marcion undertook the costly project of publishing in a single huge codex (or book) all their many Scriptures: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings, together with the Evangelists and Apostles (as they were first called).

Of these first Bibles, only three have survived: the Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Alexandrinus.

John Miller taught Bible at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., before he retired. The second part of this series will look at the message of the Bible. This article originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

Compiling the Bible

700 B.C. Deuteronomy accepted as first authoritative scroll (2 Kings 22–24)
450 B.C. Scriptures assembled and taught by Ezra and Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8–9)
430 B.C. Nehemiah establishes a library in Jerusalem where the Scriptures are housed (2 Maccabees 2:13)
300 B.C. Hebrew Scriptures are translated into Greek (Septuagint)
200 B.C. "The Law, the Prophets and the other books of the Fathers" are read by all Jews (prologue to Ecclesiasticus)
164 B.C. Hebrew Scriptures are dispersed for safekeeping during the Maccabean War, then reassembled by Judas Maccabeus (2 Maccabees 2:14)
A.D. 49 Earliest New Testament writing (probably 1 Thessalonians)
A.D. 65 Gospel of Mark (first Gospel)
A.D. 150 Marcion urges churches to get rid of Jewish Scriptures
A.D. 185 Irenaeus defends church's use of Jewish Scriptures (*Against Heresies*)
A.D. 200 The Church of Rome unites "the Evangelists and Apostles" with the "Law and the Prophets" (Tertullian, *On Prescription Against Heretics*)
A.D. 325 Constantine asks Eusebius to prepare 50 copies of the Bible for the new churches of Constantinople (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*)
A.D. 400 Bible translated into Latin (Jerome's Vulgate)
1380 First complete Bible in English (Wycliffe version)
1452 First printed Bible (Latin)
1529 First complete German Bible printed (Froschauer, Zurich)
1535 First complete English Bible printed (Coverdale version)
1560 Chapter and verse divisions (Geneva Bible)

When was Year 1?

B.C. and A.D. came into use in the sixth century when a monk named Dionysius Exiguus began to date events from the year of Jesus' birth (he was off by 4 to 6 years).

A.D. is "anno Domini," Latin for "in the year of our Lord." B.C. stands for "before Christ." Today, many use B.C.E. ("before the common era") and C.E. ("common era") as more general designations.

Further reading

The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible: An Introduction to the History of the Bible by Julio Trebolle Barrera (Brill Eerdmans, 1998)
The Formation of the Christian Bible by Hans von Campenhausen (Fortress, 1972)
Jesus and the Gospel by William Farmer (Fortress, 1982)
A General Introduction to the Bible: From Ancient Tablets to Modern Translations by David Ewert (Zondervan, 1983)
The Origins of the Bible: Rethinking Canon History by John W. Miller (Paulist Press, 1994)
Related Strangers, Jews and Christians 70-170 C.E. by Stephen G. Wilson (Fortress, 1995)
Christianity Goes to Press by Edgar J. Goodspeed (Macmillan, 1940)
The Birth of the Codex by Colin H. Roberts and T.C. Skeat (Oxford, 1983)
Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts by Harry Y. Gamble (Yale University Press, 1995)
Learning to Know the Bible by David Schroeder (Faith and Life Press/Herald Press, 1966)

Irenaeus carefully demonstrated that the church's oldest apostolic writings and teachings, including those of Paul, all bear testimony to the same God spoken of in Israel's Scriptures.

Discipline of Minneapolis congregation adds twist to area conference integration

Despite the recent discipline of a Minneapolis congregation, Iowa-Nebraska Conference and Northern District Conference believe they can do within the next year what the rest of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) have been struggling with for much of the last number of years: reach a resolution on membership.

The two conferences are exploring regional integration. During their joint annual meetings June 25-27 in Kalona, Iowa, Iowa-Nebraska placed Faith Mennonite Church on "sanctioned membership" because the congregation accepts noncelibate homosexuals as members. The conference action rescinds Faith's voting privileges and bars congregational members from holding conference offices. Faith remains a full member of Northern District.

The congregation becomes the ninth in the United States to be disciplined over the issue of homosexuality. All nine congregations have been dually affiliated. But Faith is the first to be disciplined after the area conferences with which it is affiliated decided to integrate.

Last year, Northern District, a GC conference, and MC conferences Iowa-Nebraska and North Central approved a proposal to restructure into two integrated conferences.

"I suspect [the discipline] muddies the water a little bit," says Steve Ratzlaff of the conferences' Integration Implementation Committee.

He said membership was to be on the agenda for the committee's meeting set for July 9.

"We've concentrated mostly on ... the easier stuff," Ratzlaff says. "We knew we'd have to face this one sometime."

> We knew we'd have to face this one sometime.
>
> —*Steve Ratzlaff*

But he and others are optimistic that a solution to the membership issue can be found in time to bring a final recommendation to the three conferences' delegates next year.

"I cannot tell you where things will go in the future," says Willis Busenitz, whose term as Northern District president concluded at this year's annual meeting. "But I think we have built enough of a trust relationship that we have the confidence to work this out."

Faith Mennonite member Glenn Geissinger, who was elected Northern District vice president at the conference's annual meeting, says he doesn't fear for the congregation's membership status in the new integrated conference. "I know [Faith has] some very strong allies in the Northern District Conference," he says.

At last year's Iowa-Nebraska annual meeting, a vote to expel Faith fell short of the two-thirds vote needed. At this year's meeting, the Conference Council offered no formal recommendations but suggested two options: placing Faith on sanctioned membership or take no action, leaving membership questions as part of the integration process.

A motion from the floor for sanctioned membership passed with 77 percent of the vote.

"On the floor itself, the predominant discussion was strong admonition to act," says Noah Kolb, Iowa-Nebraska conference minister.

The sanction membership option was adopted by Iowa-Nebraska in January. Previously, the only legal discipline measure was expulsion. The addition of sanction membership produced "a strong expectation that something would happen," Kolb says.

Iowa-Nebraska kept Northern District apprised of developments in a May conference call among conference leaders. "We acknowledged to each other that we work at things differently," Busenitz says. "We're not necessarily in disagreement with what they did. It's just not the way we work at things."—*Rich Preheim*

Pacific Southwest: OK membership guidelines

Pacific Southwest Conference is urging the U.S. delegates of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church to adopt the membership guidelines for the new church at St. Louis 99 later this month. Pacific Southwest took that action at its annual meeting June 25-26 in Tucson, Ariz.

While the Canadian delegates are preparing to vote on adopting the guidelines, their U.S. counterparts are scheduled to vote to receive the guidelines for study.

"We would like the U.S. side of the [new] Mennonite Church to move in concert with the Canadian," says Duane Oswald, Pacific Southwest moderator. "We'd like to move at the same pace."

The guidelines recommend that area conferences in the integrated church set and enforce their own criteria for congregational membership in the conferences. Oswald says the guidelines are acceptable now because what they propose is largely common practice. "Most [area conferences] determine who is going to be in and out," he says.

"Resolutions brought to assembly from area conferences are always in order," says Jim Schrag, general secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church.—*Rich Preheim*

MCC U.S. appeals to constituents to take up baskets as part of campaign to end sanctions against Iraq

WASHINGTON —When former Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) volunteer Wanda Kraybill, who served a year in Iraq, visited Capitol Hill earlier this year, she carried a photo of the contents of the monthly food basket available to each Iraqi citizen under U.N. sanctions.

A Senate aide, who happened to be a new father, saw the six cans of baby formula allotted in the basket and fumed at how little baby formula was included. "There's no way that can last a month," he told Kraybill.

MCC photo by Carmen Pauls

Iraqi men unload Mennonite Central Committee-donated food, which arrived in the sanctions-strapped country earlier this year.

Now MCC U.S. wants the president, vice president and every member of Congress to realize that. And the agency is appealing to its constituents in its efforts to end the sanctions.

On Aug. 6, the ninth anniversary of the imposition of U.N. sanctions, representatives from MCC U.S. and members of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches will present one week's contents of the sanctions food basket to every U.S. representative and senator and to the White House.

A weekly per-person ration for adults and children includes five pounds of wheat flour, one pound of sugar, half a pound of beans, one ounce of tea, one ounce of salt, eight ounces of cooking oil and one ounce of cheese. The adult ration also includes a small amount of soap and detergent. An infant ration, for children less than 1 year old, includes two pounds of milk powder and six ounces of weaning cereal.

"We're encouraging the president, the vice president and every member of Congress to experience for themselves the effect of these sanctions by living off this food basket for one week," says J. Daryl Byler, director of the MCC U.S. Washington Office.

As part of the campaign, MCC U.S. is appealing to constituents to prepare and deliver food baskets to congressional district offices between Aug. 2 and 5 or to mail baskets directly to Washington congressional offices before Aug. 6.

Monthly food rations last some 20 days, says Carmen Pauls, MCC worker in Iraq. So to stretch supplies, some families rotate which children eat on a given day. Before the sanctions, childhood obesity was a major problem in Iraq. Today, childhood malnutrition is at a crisis level. Humanitarian groups say the sanctions, which ban 90 percent of Iraqi imports and 97 percent of Iraqi exports, cost the lives of more than 5,000 children every month.

People interested in preparing baskets should contact Liz Harder at the MCC U.S. Washington Office: phone 202-544-6564, ext. 5, or email Elisabeth_Harder@mcc.org.—*John M. Spidaliere of MCC News Service*

> We're encouraging the president, the vice president and every member of Congress to experience for themselves the effect of these sanctions by living off this food basket for one week.
>
> —*J. Daryl Byler*

MBM photo by Christy Risser

Mobile home with a mission

A Goshen, Ind., house travels three blocks on June 17 to spare it from the wrecking ball and to raise money for missions. Goshen General Hospital had recently acquired the property and planned to clear the lot as part of an expansion project. But thanks to the work of Lucille Graber Swartzentruber, the house has been relocated to Goshen College property. Swartzentruber is a daughter of former house owners C.L. and Mina Graber. C.L. had worked at Goshen College and pastored at College Mennonite Church. Swartzentruber is a member of Communion Fellowship in Goshen, the lead congregation of Friends of the Wolof, a Mennonite-related mission organization which has sent several workers among the Wolof people of Senegal. Swartzentruber convinced the hospital to donate the house to Friends of the Wolof, which then had the house moved and sold, raising about $9,000 for Friends of the Wolof.

MEDA uses the old bean to help Bolivians develop new crop and ways to export it

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia—What do you do if a buyer wants only the most perfect, reddest beans? You sort them—by hand.

That's what's happening at ASOPROF, a Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA)-supported edible bean producers cooperative in Santa Cruz, where two women painstakingly sort beans by hand for a picky Japanese customer.

For the customer, only perfectly colored beans will do. Fifteen years ago he would have been lucky to find any edible beans in Bolivia at all—they were simply not grown. But today beans are a major cash crop, thanks in large part to the efforts of Cal Miller, who spent many years as MEDA's country manager in Bolivia. People who know about beans say he is single-handedly responsible for introducing the crop and providing the vision for a national production and marketing system.

"It's an interesting reversal, Bolivians sending food to Japan," says MEDA Bolivia country manager Alejandro Escobar. "People usually think of it as the other way around."

Prior to Miller's efforts, farmers mostly grew dryland rice during the summer, leaving the land barren in winter. In the early 1980s, the government introduced edible beans as a winter alternative but couldn't deliver on the marketing side, which was a critical issue since beans weren't part of the Bolivian diet.

Miller saw that export markets would have to be developed if beans were to be accepted by farmers. In 1986, together with university researchers, MEDA introduced a new commercial variety which had strong potential for export to neighboring Brazil. It worked, and soon many farmers were growing rice in summer and beans in winter. Today edible beans compose about 11 percent of Bolivia's annual exports of $1.1 billion.

MEDA photo by John Longhurst

A worker at ASOPROF, a Mennonite Economic Development Associates-supported cooperative in Bolivia, sorts beans to be exported to Japan.

A major player in bean exporting is ASOPROF, founded by MEDA in 1990. Composed of 17 farmer cooperatives and other producer groups, ASOPROF has become a major force in agricultural marketing in the Santa Cruz area. ASOPROF and MEDA joined forces in 1993 to create ASOMEX, a commercial exporter that could help Bolivian farmers and businesses extend their reach worldwide.

Through ASOMEX, farmers sold 40 tons of edible beans to Japan last year; Escobar estimates that 80 to 120 tons will go in 1999. ASOMEX is expanding its business to include other edible beans and peanuts.—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

Saved by ice cream

On their way home from a funeral in Ontario, Terry and Cathy Beery Berg and their two young children decided to stop for ice cream. They arrived at their house, the parsonage of Comins (Mich.) Mennonite Church, where Terry is pastor, 10 minutes after it had been completely destroyed by a tornado.

The tornado, which hit Comins about 7:30 p.m. on July 3, also leveled the church's meetinghouse. No one was injured.

A Bluffton (Ohio) College singing group planned to have been at the church at 7:30 to meet their hosts but got lost and arrived 30 minutes later.

The congregation, a member of Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, worshiped the next morning with nearby Fairview (Mich.) Mennonite Church, a member of Indiana-Michigan Conference of the Mennonite Church, which surrounded Comins members in prayer.

The 100-member congregation plans to rebuild. The parsonage was brand new. Members salvaged the pulpit, four pews and a Communion table. The debris has been cleaned up.—*Gordon Houser*

Chinese water project doesn't float with MMA

GOSHEN, Ind.—If the massive Three Gorge Dam is going to be completed on China's Yangtze River, it will happen without any help from Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA).

The organization recently informed Merrill Lynch and Salomon Smith Barney that MMA would refuse to purchase any of the $500 million bonds being underwritten by the U.S. firms or any other investments supporting the project.

The dam, being built by the Chinese government, will eliminate 240,000 acres of cropland. Project opponents, such as Friends of the Earth, National Wildlife Federation and Citizens Funds, say the same benefits could be achieved with a series of smaller dams that would displace less people, destroy fewer animal habitats and lose fewer historical sites.

"We consider this project socially and environmentally disastrous as well as financially and functionally questionable," says Mark Regier, who coordinates MMA's socially responsible investing activities. "The World Bank and U.S. Export-Import Bank have already refused to fund the project for these same reasons. Now the Chinese government is looking for private funding through organizations like Merrill Lynch."—*MMA News Service*

Franconia opts to abolish system of overseers

SOUDERTON, Pa.—The era of overseers is over in Franconia Conference. Delegates to the conference's spring assembly unanimously approved replacing the 25 current overseers with six to eight oversight ministers, four or five of whom will be full-time.

They are expected to bring specific areas of expertise, engage in long-range planning, be resources for pastors and chaplains, assist congregations and work together as a leadership team.

Currently, overseers are experienced pastors who fill the roles in their spare time and receive a modest honorarium. "Our present system is based on volunteerism, which neither fits the demands placed on overseers nor the professional character of our pastors," says conference pastor Jim Lapp, who will coordinate the work of the oversight ministers.

The cost is estimated to be as much as $200,000 higher than the overseer system. The difference will be covered initially by conference assets and later by reallocated resources.—*Franconia Conference News*

MCC to shift Balkans relief efforts

AKRON, Pa.—The flood of Kosovars returning home from Albanian refugee camps has Mennonite Central Committee staff assessing how some MCC resources, such as refugee kits, can be shifted elsewhere. MCC Europe director Hansuli Gerber says the kits would be "most useful" as the Kosovars return to destroyed homes and towns.

Meanwhile in Albania, MCC volunteers Dan and Evanna Hess are planning peacebuilding training in response to some Kosovars' desire for revenge against the Serbs. The Hesses have also helped initiate a project to supply 30,000 health-education booklets to refugees. Some books may go to Kosovo, where hospitals and clinics have been destroyed.—*MCC News Service*

Love those with mental illnesses, speaker says

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Forty people registered for the third annual retreat for families coping with long-term mental illness, held June 4-6 on the Bluffton College campus. The event was sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Resource person John A. Toews, a psychiatrist and author from Calgary, stressed the importance of loving people with mental illnesses. "Just love them," he said.

But Toews also encouraged the families to take care of themselves. "Let go the person who was in order to have energy to work with the person who is now," he said.

MMA hopes to expand the number of such retreats to three, held across the United States.

Hesston baseball player named All-American

HESSTON, Kan.—For the first time in school history, a Hesston College baseball player has been named to the All-American first team for the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III. Ryan Neufeld, a second baseman and pitcher from Moundridge, Kan., was one of four infielders named to the 12-member squad. Neufeld, who graduated in May, led the Larks with a .366 batting average, 41 hits, 26 runs, 20 stolen bases and an earned run average of 1.36.

MBs to hold first international consultation

BUHLER, Kan.—A global contingent of Mennonite Brethren will gather in Buhler July 11-14 for a historic first consultation of the International Committee of Mennonite Brethren (ICOMB). The 17 member conferences have each been asked to send four delegates.

"This meeting is a sign of the growth we have seen in our relationship as a global fellowship of belivers," says ICOMB chair Takashi Manabe of Japan. "Gathering together is essential to what ICOMB stands for: the need and desire we have to grow in community and learn from each other."

ICOMB was formed in 1990 to build a stronger global Mennonite Brethren church.

by the way ...

Sixty-nine of the 140 songs in the *Ausbund,* the Anabaptist hymnal dating back to 1564, have been translated from German into English. The *Ausbund,* still used by the Amish, is the oldest Protestant hymnal in continuous use.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

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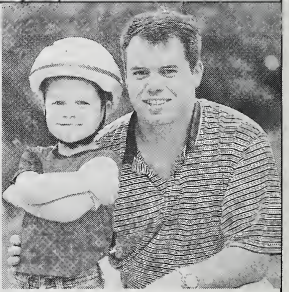

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Workers

Acosta, Dionicio and Moniqua, East Petersburg, Pa., are beginning three-year assignments with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Honduras, Dionicio as a pastoral accompaniment worker and Moniqua as a social worker.

Bonham, Rusty, was ordained June 6 as a pastor at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Fox, Juanita, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as administrative assistant in the Ten Thousand Villages information department.

Guengerich, Lisa, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Glenwood Springs, Colo., as a Ten Thousand Villages regional sales manager.

Shirk, Mim, has been named vice president of member services for Mennonite Health Services, Goshen, Ind.

Weaver, Donna, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as receiving clerk for Ten Thousand Villages.

Zook, Lester, was installed July 4 as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Births

Aeschliman, Stuart Isaac, June 10, to Jeff and Margaret (Fisher) Aeschliman, Salem, Ore.

Burkhart, Benjamin Isaac, June 18, to Dan and Gina (Oberholtzer) Burkhart, Manheim, Pa.

Duerksen, Olivia Jade, May 23, to Angie (Penner) and Gary Duerksen, Goessel, Kan.

Good, Lauren Marley, June 12, to Michael and Stacey (Halvorsen) Good, St. Jacobs, Ont.

Hartzler, Lauren Elizabeth, May 27, to Kent and Stephanie (Wenger) Hartzler, Lancaster, Pa.

Horst, Tali Harder, April 23, to Marlene (Harder) and Rene Horst, Lewiston, Maine.

Hostetler, Ian Matthew, June 16, to Mary (Yoder) and Merle Hostetler, Denver.

Hostetler, Michael Evan, June 20, to Delores (Bontrager) and Douglas Hostetler, Topeka, Ind.

Johnson, Jill Marie, May 27, to Janet (Fleeman) and Mark Johnson, Washington, Ill.

Jones, Mason Lynn, June 21, to Amy (Gustovich) and Matt Jones, Shipshewana, Ind.

Krisetya, Elia Niell Larson, May 26, to Karin and Matius Larson Krisetya, Mandeville, Jamaica.

Landis, Jason Seth, June 17, to Beverly (Reinford) and Jay Landis, Dublin, Pa.

Landis, Joshua David, June 17, to Brian and Susan (Chirico) Landis, East Greenville, Pa.

Litwiller, Lane Michael, June 23, to Kim (Watkins) and Marc Litwiller, Hopedale, Ill.

Longacre, Levi Garret, May 15, to Bob and Dana (Vallauri) Longacre, Quakertown, Pa.

Miller, Daniel Levi, May 2S, to Tina (Yoder) and Tony Miller, Plain City, Ohio.

Morrison, Danika Kathryn Smith, June 3, to Gerald Morrison and Barb Smith-Morrison, Linwood, Ont.

Moyer, Jacob Brody, June 7, to Miranda and Troy Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Parker, Kaitlin Grace, May 23, to Shawn and Tonya (Williams) Parker, Broadway, Va.

Paynter, Kelsee Dawn, June 24, to Johanna (Lapp) and Ray Paynter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Sander, Dalton Keith, June 16, to Brian and Trish (Dyer) Sander, Plainville, Kan.

Siebert, Zachary James, June 21, to Leo and Susan (Woods) Siebert, McCool Junction, Neb.

Marriages

Blosser/Blyer: Kristina Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va., and Doug Blyer, Harrisonburg, June 19 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

Clark/Sager: James Clark, Pottstown, Pa., and April Sager, May 22, at Pottstown.

Earnest/ Santschi: Chris Earnest, Nampa, Idaho, and Stiana Santschi, Spokane, Wash., May 29 at Spokane.

Frederick/Smith: Erica Joy Frederick, Quakertown, Pa., and Joel Smith, Puebla, Mexico, April 17 at Puebla.

Friesen/Giesbrecht: Jeanette Friesen, Altona, Man., and Matthew Giesbrecht, Altona, July 3 at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Goertzen/Hudacek: Brenda Goertzen, Milford, Neb., and Larry Hudacek, Milford, May 29 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Immel/Shoup: Sheila Immel, Kidron, Ohio, and Kevin Shoup, Mt. Eaton, Ohio, June 19 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Kauffman/Shrock: Irene Kauffman, Belleville, Pa., and Mahlon Shrock, Belleville, June 19 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Kropf/Neer: Linn James Kropf, Phoenix, and Jennifer Lee Neer, West Liberty, Ohio, June 12 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Miller/Thompson: Carla Miller, Goshen, Ind., and Tim Thompson, Elkhart, Ind., June 19 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Moran/Walker: Wanda Moran, Gulfport, Miss., and J.T. Walker, Gulfport, June 11 at Mobile, Ala.

Reynolds/Yoder: Jamison Reynolds, Wellman, Iowa, and Shawna Yoder, Wellman, June 19 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Slagle/Thomas: Deb Slagle, Milford, Neb., and Jon Thomas, Milford, June 18 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Smith/Zook: Erin Smith, State College, Pa., and Kenneth Zook, Belleville, Pa., June 12 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Tillery/Weaver: Joel Tillery, Meridian, Miss., and Stacie Weaver, Gulfport, Miss., June 19 at Gulfhaven Mennonite Church, Gulfport.

Deaths

Borntrager, Andrew, 91, Hesston, Kan., died June 11 of a heart attack. Spouse: Barbara Plank Borntrager. Parents: A.D. and Amellia Chupp Borntrager (deceased). Other survivors: children Andrew, David, Daniel, John, Charles, Betty Eash; 22 grandchildren, 51 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Yoder (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Chupp, Levi, 83, Millersburg, Ind., died June 9 of heart failure. Spouse: Ella Mae Chupp. Parents: Moses and Susanna Chupp (deceased). Other survivors: children Sara Jean Zook, Susie Kauffman, Sheryle Barden, Dean; 10 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Clinton Brick Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Cooke, Berneice, 65, Freeport, Ill., died May 27 of cancer. Spouse: Eldon Cooke. Parents: Mervin and Iona Shelley Gramley (deceased). Other survivors: children Dean, Cynthia Weisel; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 1 at Freeport Mennonite Church.

Feather, Anna Hartzler, 86, West Liberty, Ohio, died June 10 of a heart attack. Spouse: Maurice Feather (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Martha Zook Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Myron, Clara Hughes; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 13 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Hahn, Alice Gardner, 85, Kidron, Ohio, died June 2, of a heart attack. Spouse: Ronald Hahn (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Alta Miller Gardner (deceased). Survivor: son Ron. Funeral: June S at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Kauffman, Ruth Miller, 93, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 5. Spouse: Fred Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Elroy, Eunice Kraybill, Glenn, Lowell, Lyle, Leanna Beiler, Dale; 19 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Krehbiel, Jennie Jantz, 94, Hesston, Kan., died May 17. Spouse: Arthur Krehbiel (deceased). Parents: John and Susie Jantz (deceased). Survivors: children Carol Muirhead, James; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 21 at Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash.

Mellinger, Mildred Frey, 93, Glendale, Ariz., died May 29. Spouse: Howard Mellinger. Parents: Daniel and Edith Frey (deceased). Other survivors: children Edith Troyer, Erwin, Leonard; eight grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4, at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill.

Miller, Orpha, S9, Middletown, Pa., died June 23. Parents: Raymond and Ruth Longenecker Miller. Funeral: June 1S at Good's Mennonite Church, Bainbridge, Pa.

Murphy, Darla, 36, Lancaster, Pa., died June 11 of heart failure. Parents: Charles Denlinger (deceased) and Faith Heiss Denlinger Brown. Other survivors: children Todd Lockard, Londa. Funeral: June 14 at Lancaster, Pa.

Row, Ethel, 91, Washington, Ill., died June 17 of cancer. Spouse: Forrest Row (deceased). Parents: William and Freida Wind (deceased). Survivors: children Ron, Marilyn Marquis; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 21 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

Schertz, Imogene Scott, 71, Washington, Ill., died June 18 of cancer. Spouse: Robert Schertz. Parents: Sydney and Grace Scott (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, James, Judy Maggio, Cheryl Strubhar; eight grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

Shank, Leonard, 88, Chambersburg, Pa., died June 12. Spouse: Luella Martin Shank (deceased). Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Christian Shank (deceased). Survivors: children Doris Fritz, Darlene Rosenberry, Dorothy Crider, Dolly Myers, Leon Shank; 19 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Wyse, Ora, 80, Naubinway, Mich., died May 25 of cancer. Spouse: Esther Ellen Wyse. Parents: Albert and Abby Baer Wyse (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Carlton, Mervin, Gerald; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral May 28 at Naubinway.

classifieds

- **Garden Valley Church** ***40th anniversary celebration:*** Sept. 4-5, Garden City, Kansas; 888-866-7410; email gardenvalleychurch@juno.com

- **Third MCC Black Hills Bike Tour,** ***Sept. 9-12, 1999.*** For more information, call 605-925-4859 or email barbschrag@mail.mcc.org. Reservations must be made by Aug. 1.

- **East Goshen Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a pastoral team member with emphasis on ***youth and young adults***. Contact Search Team, East Goshen Mennonite Church, 17861 SR 4, Goshen, IN 46528; email egmenno@npcc.net; web site eastgoshen.in.us.mennonite.net

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, a K-8 school with 460 students in suburban Lancaster, Pa., has openings for a ***4th-grade teacher*** and a part-time ***gifted education director*** beginning mid-August 1999.

  Mail resumes to Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; fax 717-394-4944.

- **Zion Mennonite Church**, Archbold, Ohio, is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor*** with the primary focus on pastoral care and small groups, also assisting with preaching and worship planning.

  Send resume or inquiry to Barnaby Wyse, 432 Clover Lane, Archbold, OH 43502; 419-445-0083; email Barnabyrw@juno.com

- **New Danville Mennonite School**, Lancaster, Pa., accredited K-8, is seeking teacher applicants for the following full-time positions: ***middle school science, middle school language arts*** and ***part-time 4th- and 5th-grade teachers***. Beginning August 1999.

  Contact Shirley Garber, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201; email ndms40@juno.com

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a full-time ***director of finance*** beginning in August 1999. Responsibilities include budget development, fiscal management, employee benefits, facility management and long-range planning. Penn View is affiliated with the Mennonite churches in southeastern Pennsylvania and serves 560 students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

  Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196.

- **Western Mennonite School** has open positions for fall 1999:
  Salaried full-time: Girls resident director
  Salaried part-time teaching: Spanish, ESL, art, math and accounting
  VS positions: Assistant boys resident director, maintenance assistant, assistant cook.
  Stipend: Soccer coach, girls volleyball coach, bus driver
  Contact Darrel White, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Franconia Mennonite Conference**, Souderton, Pa., seeks confident, creative person with Anabaptist perspective to develop unique position with Franconia Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Resources Network (MRN) as ***communications coordinator***. Initial one-year position involves producing Franconia Conference News and other communications, as well as developing new MRN communications and news service. Seeking skills in writing, layout and photography.

  Apply by mailing resume to Jana Hostetter, Human Resource Manager, Box 116, Souderton, PA 18964; fax 215-721-1211; email janah@MRN.org

- **Walnut Hills Retirement Community**, Walnut Creek, Ohio, seeks a ***director of nursing***, an opportunity for an RN with gifts/interest in management and older adults to join the team at Walnut Hills by fall 1999. The 102-resident nursing home, established in 1971, is owned and managed by Mennonites and the 150 associates reflect this community's Christian values.

  Contact David Miller, pres/adm, P.O. Box 127, Walnut Creek, OH 44687; 330-893-3200; email whills@tusco.net

- **Orange Christian Academy** is a grade 7-12 college-prep school located on Cleveland, Ohio's east side. Teachers are needed in the following areas: ***English literature and composition, health and physical education, science, and social studies***. OCA offers a unique opportunity to work within a diverse population of African-American and Caucasian students and is located in close proximity to Lee Heights Community Church, which is associated with the Ohio Mennonite Conference.

  Call John Dutcher, administrator, 216-464-7616, or send resume to Orange Christian Academy, 27200 Emery Road, Cleveland, OH 44128.

- **Highland Retreat** has openings for two full-time salaried positions:

  Administrator: Responsible for marketing, fund-raising, financial leadership, staff development and general administration. Must be a member of the Mennonite Church or MCC constituent.

  Facility manager: Responsible for the care of facilities, grounds and equipment.

  Highland Retreat, near Harrisonburg, Va., is affiliated with the Virginia Mennonite Conference and offers summer youth camp programs and year-round retreat facilities. Contact Highland Retreat, 14783 Upper Highland Dr., Bergton, VA 22811; 540-852-3226.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is currently taking applications for ***school administrator*** for the school year beginning August 2000. We are looking for a candidate with a master's in education or administration, and five years teaching experience. Lititz Area Mennonite School provides a K-8 Christ-centered education within an Anabaptist framework to Christian families in its geographical area. With an enrollment of 240, we are located in a semi-rural section of Lancaster County.

  If you are interested in this position, please send your application to Board Chairman, Lititz Area Mennonite School, 1050 East Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543.

- **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp** needs ***volunteers!*** This summer and fall, RMMC will embark on a major building project as part of its 10-year plan, culminating in 2002, the 50th anniversary of the camp. We hope to break ground the middle of May on a 3,460-sq. ft. addition to the dining lodge. It will include a new dining area, handicapped accessible bathrooms, a staff lounge, offices and nurse's station. Additionally, the kitchen will be renovated. We will have a project supervisor on site through the summer and fall but will rely on volunteers to complete the work. Housing is available.

  Please contact one of the following volunteer coordinators to schedule your work time: Glen Stehman, 316-327-4609 (Hesston, Kan.); Leon Stutzman, 303-797-3551 (Denver); and Verlin Kuhns, 719-384-7304 (La Junta, Colo.).

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by Gordon Houser

Summer is when we may indulge more often in recreational activity. Thus it's a good time to think about how we recreate, how we entertain ourselves. Does it make us freer, or are we, in author Neil Postman's words, "amusing ourselves to death"?

Mark S. Cary, a Quaker, discusses this topic in his article "Our Testimony Against Recreations" in the June issue of *Friends Journal*. He argues that in our society we tend toward excess in our recreation. He mentions three principles that govern this tendency: (1) scarcity evolution, "the notion that we want more because … more has been better in our biological past"; (2) slippery slope, the tendency to "begin with something harmless in itself that leads to harm" (he uses the example of the granola bar, which began as a health food but "devolved into a candy bar, the very item it was designed to replace"); (3) supernormal stimulus, "a creation that is … larger than life" and thus plays on our emotions (he uses the example of a hot-fudge sundae).

Cary writes that when he worked for ABC-Disney he saw how the fall TV lineup was created. Groups of people were shown test shows, or pilots, then interviewed about how they liked them.

"Entertainment and materialism are closely related," he writes. He quotes the owner of a large department store, who said, "Retailing is recreation. … It has nothing to do with need. We don't need a … thing. We buy things because it makes us feel good." Our consumption is less about things than about experiences, about entertainment.

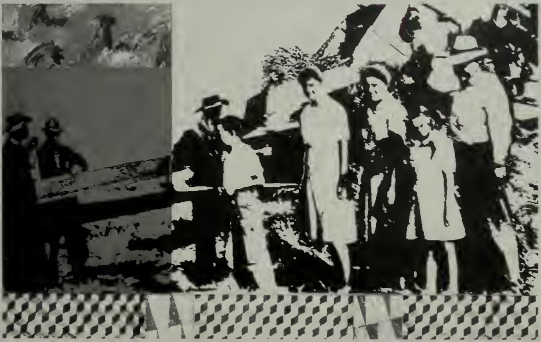
How then do we control our recreations so that they don't get out of hand? Cary offers three recommendations: (1) Ask for and accept God's help, (2) review our recreations and (3) change the environment by removing temptations and changing how our world works.

He recommends, for example, that we list what we do for fun and how much it costs, then pray about each one, asking God the simple question, Should I be doing this?

Cary looked at how he had arranged his house. He moved the television to a little-used room and now watches less TV, "especially entertainment disguised as news." He tries to spend more time visit-ing people, especially the elderly.

You or I may not agree with Cary's arguments or solutions, but he raises good questions that we all should face. We need to learn some measure of detachment from the need to be entertained or else we lose our identity as followers of Christ. As Richard Rohr writes in *Everything Belongs* (see notice below): "Without the art of detachment, the culture becomes addictive."

True recreation brings freedom.


Quesada/Burke

The Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Historical Society is exhibiting "A Sense of Place and Time: Growing Up Mennonite," a series of large and small heritage works on family, religious and cultural themes produced by Abner Hershberger of Goshen, Ind. The series is a reflection of Hershberger's life as the ninth of 10 children on a family farm near Fargo, N.D. The exhibit is open to the public until Oct. 31. Above is an acrylic and screen painting from the exhibit.

books

Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer by Richard Rohr (Crossroad, 1999, $14.95) is simply written yet deeply challenging and will not appeal to all readers. At the base of all reality, Rohr writes, is God's "radical grace."

The Ladder of the Beatitudes by Jim Forest (Orbis, 1999, $13) employs biblical insights with both ancient and contemporary stories and quotes to encourage Christians to live by these teachings, to increasingly share "in the life of God."

films

Films can take us into worlds we would not visit otherwise. Such is *Three Seasons* (PG), a Vietnamese work filmed in Vietnam. We see this hidden country through the eyes of a trio of poor people. Though flawed by reliance on clichés, it engages our emotions and confronts us rich Westerners.

Tarzan (G) is for all ages and Disney's best in years. Edgar Rice Burroughs' mythic tale depicts well the struggle of identity.

music

Songs to Live By: Passing on Hymns of the Faith (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $15.95 for CDs, $10.95 for cassettes) features 16 hymns and songs from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. It includes adult and children's voices and a variety of instrumentation. It is a delight to listen to and should fulfill its goal of appealing to children. It should be in every Mennonite home.

Carol Ann Weaver: journey begun with Cate Friesen, vocalist ($18 for CD, available from Weaver at 132 Avondale Ave. S., Waterloo, ON N2L 2C3), is different. Experimental, it sets poems by Judith Miller, Shari Wagner, Donna Burkhart and Chris Burkhart (age 10 at the time) to avant-garde music. This is not easy listening but challenges listeners' usual categories. Highlights are the haunting "West of Brutus" and Weaver's own "Journey Just Begun," a memorial to her mother and mother-in-law.

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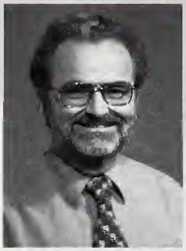
J. Lorne Peachey

The stories are in the struggle, not the scandal

We had a meaningful service in my home congregation last Sunday. The sermon was good—not too long, not too short, well-organized, with enough provocative ideas to keep a discussion class going for an hour. We sang enthusiastically, both four-part and off the wall. The youth gave a drama, and there was a stirring testimony from a new believer. It was a service that had me forgetting myself and concentrating on God—my definition of true worship.

It was not a service, however, you'll read about in these pages. Nor will you about most of hundreds of others services in Mennonite congregations across North America the same Sunday. Instead, you'll more likely find a story in *The Mennonite* about a conflict that happened in one of these congregations or conferences—such as the one on page 8 of this issue.

Why? Why do you print so much negative stuff, one person asked on a readership survey we did recently, when there's so much good that's happening in the church: lives being changed, souls being saved, sinners being redeemed?

Why indeed?

Part of the answer can be found in the definition of news itself. Let a dog bite a man, and everybody yawns. But let a man bite a dog, and you'll have reporters falling all over each other to be the first with the story.

News is that which is out of the ordinary, different, unusual. Often it also seems to be about conflict.

Religion observer Martin E. Marty of the Public Religion Project notes: "Denominations and congregations may go about their business doing thousands of things a year, but often the only time their doings see print is during a one-week national convention when they fight over homosexuality, abortion and intradenominational matters that rarely concern them otherwise."

Marty's charge is well-founded. It's one reason we try to carry both positive and negative news. But even here we run into problems of definition. Often positive stories are those we agree with, negative the ones we don't.

In spite of these difficulties, *The Mennonite* attempts, however falteringly, to balance both good and bad—by anybody's definition. We do so fully aware that even were the balance 50-50, what tends to get remembered and discussed are stories about conflict and disagreement.

Which brings up the subject of reader interest. Marty asks: Are members of religious groups curious enough about the positive to warrant additional effort in securing stories about the good? That he makes it a question likely shows his answer would be no.

Marty may be right. I have noticed that at churchwide assemblies and delegate sessions, during reports of good things happening, people wander in and out, hold whispered conversations, daydream, read or nap. But let the word get out that a controversial issue is on the agenda, and the room packs out, with all attention focused to the front. It's been standing-room-only at more than one assembly when things get hot.

The cynic, of course, will say people are just interested in scandal. We who edit this magazine have also been accused of reporting the controversial and the sensational in order to sell subscriptions—an intriguing idea, if I thought it really worked!

But I believe there's much more to the interest in conflict than this. We in the community of believers want to know about our disagreements because being faithful is difficult. We also know, perhaps instinctively, that we do not have a corner on truth but will come closer to truth by listening to each other.

So *The Mennonite* will continue to report what's happening in the church—both the "good" and the "bad." Not because we enjoy reporting about fights and disagreements. But because we believe that through the struggle we can come to a mutual understanding of truth, acceptance of each other and greater faithfulness as disciples in today's world.

Marty puts it well. For the religious journalist, he summarizes, the stories are in the struggle, not the scandal.—*jlp*

We believe that through the struggle we can come to a mutual understanding of truth, acceptance of each other and greater faithfulness as disciples in today's world.

the Mennonite
July 20, 1999

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Christ the opponent

I would like to join the chorus of praise for editor J. Lorne Peachey's editorials of June 1 ("What to Do With the Enemy We Need") and June 22 ("What Ecclesiastes Has to Say About Diversity"). It seems to me that Peachey's ideas on enemies and diversity provide support for continuing to struggle with each other toward learning something new rather than coming apart.

I'm sure it was a great difficulty for many people who encountered Jesus to learn from and appreciate him. He was by all accounts a challenging teacher and leader. What if this same Christ is in the one who appears as opponent to me today? I don't want to be oblivious to the Spirit of Christ in any form. And I'm confident that the Spirit is present in greater variety than I can imagine. As poet Gerard Manley Hopkins writes: "Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?) / With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim; / He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: Praise him."—*Vernon K. Rempel, Denver*

Supporting efforts

Reading Perry Bush's article, "Christian Propriety and the Fourth of July" (June 22), I thought, "Wow! This will be a great lead-in to an article about the upcoming hymnsing for peace in Washington on the Fourth of July." Unfortunately, that potential article wasn't printed even though *The Mennonite* received a news release about it. Instead, a five-line announcement appeared in "For the Record" (June 22).

Disappointed by this editorial decision, I'm left with three questions and a parting thought.

1. Do editors of *The Mennonite* not support this event (which would explain why they included no accompanying explanation or context)?

2. If they are supportive, why didn't they print a real article about the hymnsing, helping to promote and increase participation in a uniquely Mennonite response to the "powers"?

3. Why publish a feature article calling for active celebration of Peace Sunday on the Fourth of July and then fail to share a story about an opportunity to participate in such a celebration?

I for one would like to see the official periodical of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church be more supportive of Mennonite activities that attempt to live out our beliefs rather than be just the voice of the quiet (but theoretically interesting and intellectually stimulating) in the land.
—*Dave Hockman-Wert, Huntingdon, Pa.*

Time travel?

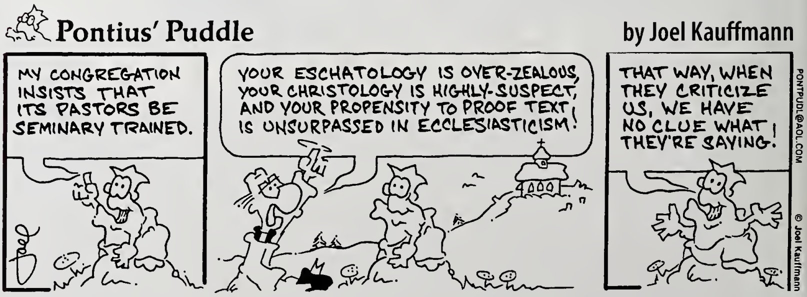
I loved the 1927 picture of Belleville, Pa., Mennonites ("Changing Times, Mixed Emotions," July 6). The rows of cars in the left background are Fords from the mid 1930s. The row on the right includes a 1940 Chevy, among other early '40s General Motors products. Quite a forward-looking bunch those Belleville people must have been.—*Maynard R. Shirk, Conestoga, Pa.*

Automobile anachronism: 1930s cars in a 1927 photo?

Editor's note: A number of readers noted the discrepancy between models of the automobiles in the photo and when the photo was supposedly taken, proving themselves more keen on cars than The Mennonite *staff or the Archives of the Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., which provided the photo along with the incorrect date. The photo is not of the 1927 Mennonite Church General Conference at Belleville but rather of the 1939 session at Allensville, Pa.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


MY CONGREGATION INSISTS THAT ITS PASTORS BE SEMINARY TRAINED.
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THAT WAY, WHEN THEY CRITICIZE US, WE HAVE NO CLUE WHAT THEY'RE SAYING!
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theMennonite

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readers say

On purity and love

So the concept of integration, which was so heartily agreed to in both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, has its back against the wall with the sticking point being membership—with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective caught in the middle. The challenge, it seems to me, is whether we believe Christ's very strong emphasis on unity is to be the center of the confession of faith or whether the demand for purity is to be center.

If we put our emphasis upon purity of practice and theology, do we not revert back to the Old Testament and its 660-plus laws and codes of conduct? Humankind has always had the propensity to control everything by laws and regulations. Such an emphasis fills jails, espouses fear and authoritarianism and finally collapses from within. A modern case of emphasizing purity is the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. When the emphasis is on purity, then law is the chastening rod, and the larger group fragments into many splinter groups, for purity cannot tolerate diversity.

But when the emphasis is on unity, then we move toward the middle and open our arms of love to pull in and accept the diversity of the right and the left. The only thing that will make unity work is love, not law.

I feel that those representatives who developed the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective did a remarkable job of emphasizing the great spiritual truths that are central to Mennonite-Anabaptist understandings of Scripture. The emphasis is on unity, and the glue is love.

Let us be wary of making the confession of faith a set of black and white laws that can be a code to test for membership. Can one codify love?—*Evan Oswald, Glendale, Ariz.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Hearing angels without knowing it

by Gardner C. Hanks

Most Saturday mornings I drive seven miles south of my home in Boise to the Idaho Maximum Security Institution. There I spend a couple of hours talking, reading the Bible and praying with my friend Jim Wood. My title is spiritual adviser, but our lives have been so different and his current situation so strange to me that I have little advice to give. When I hear his stories about his life and look at the realities of his prison existence, I feel both blessed and naive.

What I can do is listen. Most days Jim is locked in his cell for 23 hours. He rarely gets to see another human being. He can talk to other inmates "through the vents," but this gives him no privacy when he has something personal to say. My visits provide him with one of the few times he can speak freely about what is on his mind and soul. My willingness to listen shows that God is still listening, too. For a man who is seeking God's forgiveness, this is vitally important, and our conversations have been moving spiritual experiences for me as well. Through them I have learned the spiritual value of listening.

Jesus also taught us to listen. In Luke 18:35-43, Jesus is walking through a crowd of people. The noise is overwhelming. All around him, people are making demands. Yet through this uproar, Jesus hears a call for help from a blind beggar. He stops and seeks out the man.

He asks the man what he wants. This seems strange. Can't Jesus see that the man is blind? But Jesus shows that this beggar is more than his disability. Jesus recognizes that this man, like all human beings, has many needs and desires. He does not make the assumption that the beggar is interested only in curing his blindness. He gives the beggar a chance to speak for himself, and, in doing so, Jesus honors the man's humanity.

Listening is a gift. Have you ever had someone turn off a TV program in order to listen to you? When someone listens to us, it tells us what we have to say is important.

Most of us have felt ignored. We have tried to tell someone something important to us, but he looks at his watch or her eyes glaze over or he pays attention to something else. The everyday business of living seems to get in the way of listening to each other. When someone takes the time to give us his or her full attention, we are grateful. It means they value us as a human being. This is the gift Jesus gave the blind beggar, one we should give each other.

But listening is not something we do naturally or easily. We want to make sure we have our own say, so when someone is talking to us, we are often more interested in making a good reply than in understanding what they are saying. We must choose to listen. When we do so, we put aside what we are doing, just as Jesus stopped his journey to listen to the beggar.

Listening is more than just paying attention, however. It is also suspending judgment. Like Jesus, who did not assume the blind man was only interested in his blindness, we must not make assumptions about what people say to us. Jesus says, "Do not judge" (Luke 6:37). If we are busy judging our neighbors, we cannot be listening to them. Listening means we are trying to understand, not getting ready to reply. Jesus did not judge the beggar's need before hearing from the beggar himself. Listening means we suspend judgment for a while. We often learn that our point of view does not take into account important factors.

In slowing us down and helping us understand, listening becomes a tool of nonviolence. Violence is the result of fear and feeling devalued. When we listen to our enemies, we show that we value them, and we begin to understand the situation from their point of view. Listening de-escalates conflict. People who know that someone is listening to them become less fearful because they feel valued. When people know that they have been heard, they no longer need to shout. If we want to work for peace at home, in our communities and in our churches, we must be willing to listen.

Listening is important in all areas of our lives. It is essential in marriage and child rearing. Research has shown that children whose parents listen to them usually become good listeners themselves. Listening to our spouses and our children can have an important positive impact for generations.

Listening can also have positive effects on community life. Christians can make a difference by becoming nonjudgmental listeners to both sides of social conflicts. Even when we have strong feelings about an issue, we should look for ways to become mediators and not merely participants in the conflict. As listeners, we may be able to help our communities find unexpected, creative solutions to problems.

We desperately need to be listeners in the affairs of the church. We too often want to be prophets without hearing the voice of God as it comes to us through fellow church members.

We can hear God's voice in many ways: the Scriptures, in nature or the movement of history. God also speaks to us through other human beings. When we listen to these voices, we may, to paraphrase the writer of Hebrews, hear "angels without knowing it."

In slowing us down and helping us understand, listening becomes a tool of nonviolence. Violence is the result of fear and feeling devalued. When we listen to our enemies, we show that we value them, and we begin to understand the situation from their point of view.

Gardner C. Hanks is a member of Hyde Park Mennonite Church, Boise, Idaho, and author of Against the Death Penalty *(Herald Press, 1997).*

Marilyn Nolt

Sneaker evangelism

A Mennonite youth group's outreach to a homeless man reaps thanks six years later.

by Norma Stauffer

A man named Dave called information and asked, "Operator, can you help me locate a phone number for Forest Hills Mennonite Church somewhere in Pennsylvania?" When Dave reached the church office, it had been almost six years since some of the youth of Forest Hills had first met him.

At the 1993 Mennonite Youth Convention in Philadelphia, the high school youth from the Forest Hills Church passed a homeless man every day as they walked from their hotel to the convention center. One day the man stopped them to ask what was going on at this Mennonite gathering.

The group stopped for daily chats with Dave, their new acquaintance. He said he had spent his early years in a city-operated orphanage. To escape the abuse there, he ran away at age 15. Since that time, the streets had been his home. He told the group, "You kids don't know how lucky you are to have parents that love you."

Dave's home in Philadelphia was a cardboard box. Two books, a blanket and the clothes on his back were all he had. One day Dave said he wished he had a Bible.

The teens saw that Dave had many needs. He was a large man, and the size 12 shoes he wore were too small for his feet. On the last day of the convention, the youth group gave him new sneakers—his size—three pairs of socks and a Bible. The inscription on the front read, "From your friends at Forest Hills Mennonite Church." All the teens signed their names. Six years later, Dave used that inscription to contact Forest Hills.

When the phone rang at the church, Dave didn't know whom to ask for. He remembered the catchy name of a grocery store owned by one of the youth leaders, and the church connected him with Dennis Sharp. Later that evening, Dennis received a call.

"I'm Dave from Philadelphia," the voice said. "I'm calling to thank you."

Over the years, Dennis and Randy Esch, another youth leader, made frequent business trips to Philadelphia and looked for Dave on the streets. But they never saw him.

Dave said that after the convention he became depressed and decided to hitchhike to Florida. He contacted his birth family, but that was "a disaster," he said. In Florida he met a pastor who "took me under his wing and put me on a good path," Dave said. Later he spent one year at a Bible school in New York. His life took a positive turn.

Maybe we planted a seed. Along the way, God used that seed to speak to Dave. It just goes to show what good can come of a small deed. Often we don't get to see the results, but this time we did.—*Dennis Sharp, youth leader*

Now Dave lives in Rochester, N.Y., where he works as a night-shift security guard and rents a small apartment. He said he has been attending church there as well.

Six years after Dave met the Forest Hills youth, he called the church because he wanted to thank them for spending time with him, for the shoes and for the Bible. He told Dennis he continues to read his Bible and hopes that someday he can be involved in youth ministry.

"Maybe we planted a seed," Dennis says. "Along the way, God used that seed to speak to Dave. It just goes to show what good can come of a small deed. Often we don't get to see the results, but this time we did."

Norma Stauffer is a member of Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

As youth groups raise money to go to this month's youth convention in St. Louis, many churches ask, Is it worth it to spend so much money on such a trip? Is there spiritual value to these events, or do our teens just go there to have fun? After hearing Dave's story, I say, Pass me the bread. I'm ready to serve up more soup and sandwiches. —*Norma Stauffer*

Marilyn Nolt

The message of the Bible

Those who created the first Christian Bible were making a statement. In this second of three articles on the Bible, John Miller shows that by adding Christian Scriptures to Israel's Scriptures, these believers were saying that the church's story can rightly be understood only as a continuation of Israel's story. But what exactly is Israel's story, and how does the New Testament continue that story?

by John Miller

Israel's story is not just about Israel but about God the Creator, who is sovereign over all peoples. Israel was called to be a light and a blessing to troubled nations. Its Scriptures end on a note of renewal and hope.

Most people are aware that there are many wonderful stories in the Old Testament, but there is less awareness that these stories are woven into a longer narrative that is essential for understanding the New Testament.

There is no question where the story told in Israel's Scriptures begins—with God creating the heavens and the earth. From that point, the Old Testament books take us through history. But where does the story end?

Here there is some confusion, due in part to the way the Old Testament books are arranged in the Christian Bible. In the Jewish Bible, the same 39 books are arranged differently. Instead of the prophetic books being at the end, suggesting that this is how the story ends, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and the 12 minor prophets are located right after 2 Kings, where they belong chronologically. Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles are at the end of the collection.

Thus, in the Jewish Bible, what we learn about Israel's restoration in Ezra and Nehemiah is the climax and close of Israel's story. 1 and 2 Chronicles summarize and retell, with additions, the story told from Genesis to Ezra and Nehemiah.

A drama in three acts: I think of this long story as a drama of hope for the world in three acts. Act One is the remarkable account in Genesis 1–11 of the origins of nations. Here we learn about the beginning of the world, of human beings made in God's image and of God's desire that they become co-regents in the care of the world.

Here we learn of the origins of the family and the human bent toward willfulness, violence and anarchy, of a catastrophic flood and God's determination, despite human evil, to care for the world and its diverse peoples. Here we are told of God's decrees to Noah's descendants to restrain violence by distinguishing between killing an animal and killing a human being: "Whoever spills the blood of a human being, by a human being shall his blood be spilled, for in his own image God made humankind" (Genesis 9:6).

Only now, with these decrees in place, can nations and civilizations arise and flourish under the blessing of God (Genesis 10). The stage is set for a human history characterized by divided families and nations marred by pride but still cared for by God and richly blessed. Act One defines the biblical story as a world story.

Act Two unfolds against this background, beginning with God's summons to Abraham and Sarah. If they follow God's leading, God will create through them a people that will both be blessed and bring blessing to all nations (Genesis 12–13). The story continues with their descendants' slavery in Egypt, liberation, wilderness wanderings, revelations at Sinai, the return to the Promised Land and the miraculous growth of this people under David into nationhood.

Right at this moment—when a great temple has been built, blessings abound and hopes are high that other peoples might come to know their God—things go seriously wrong. Solomon opens Israel's doors to other gods and values (1 Kings 11:1-8). Disintegration follows, despite attempts at state reforms by kings Hezekiah and Josiah. Then comes almost total annihilation at the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians (2 Kings 17–25).

Act Two is the origin, rise, apostasy and near destruction of a people called by God to be blessed and to be a blessing to all nations.

Act Three begins with prophets who appear just at the point when Israel's territory is being invaded. Israel has lost its way. But God still loves you, say the prophets. There is hope for the future.

In about 70 years, you will be restored to your homeland, Jeremiah says to the captives in Babylon. You will return to God, and God's law will be written on your heart.

Isaiah says, Israel shall be a light to the nations so that God's salvation may reach the remotest parts of the earth.

Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles tell the story of how these hopes begin to be fulfilled (Ezra 1:1). The Persian monarch Cyrus restores the Israelite people to their homeland, and the temple is rebuilt (Ezra 6). Ezra's renewing mission to this community is inaugurated, and the Scriptures he has assembled are introduced during a weeklong convention (Nehemiah 8). Those willing to do so pray for guidance as they listen to their story, then make a covenant with their God to walk in his ways (Nehemiah 9–10).

This is a new Israel, not a kingdom led by kings but a people freely covenanted to walking in the light of the teachings now enshrined in their Scriptures. This is the climax of the three-act drama of hope for the world set forth in Israel's Scriptures.

Adding the Christian story: Writing around A.D. 200, the church father Tertullian refers to a momentous action by the church at Rome. Besieged by heresies, the church took steps to "unite" certain Christian Scriptures ("Evangelists and Apostles," he calls them) with the older Israelite Scriptures ("Law and Prophets"). Thus began the process of publishing these Scriptures together in a single volume.

How does the Christian story connect with Israel's story? As noted, Israel's story is not just about Israel but about God the Creator, who is sovereign over all peoples. Israel's story only makes sense when it is read against the background story of the willful, proud and divided peoples in Genesis 1–11.

Israel was called to be a light and a blessing to these troubled nations. Its Scriptures end on a note of renewal and hope. But in the third and second centuries B.C., Israel's faith was severely tested when the Greeks and Romans took Persia's place as rulers. Israel was ravaged by cruel persecutions. Prayers went up to God for deliverance.

In 167 B.C., a war of liberation erupted within Israel, resulting in a temporary but fragile restoration of Israel's kingdom. Many began praying for the coming of an Anointed One (a Messiah), someone like David who in the power of God would gather Israel's scattered tribes, purge her of sinners and restore her kingdom so powerfully that God would be exalted at a place to be seen by all nations.

It is against this background of intense messianic expectations that we see the connection to the church's story, for in the Christian Scriptures we read how the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth quickly came to the conclusion that he was the Anointed One, the Messiah, for whom so many had been praying.

How excited they must have been as Jesus proclaimed that God's kingdom was near—but also how puzzled when he did nothing to bring about the anticipated events but simply "went about doing good" (Acts 10:35).

And how puzzled they must have been when he portrayed God's kingdom, not as the unfolding of a grand, cosmic scenario but in images of seeds growing, dough rising, workers generously compensated, lost sheep and sons being found. Yet when he spoke of going to Jerusalem for Passover their hearts beat fast with expectation.

For them this meant one thing: Jesus was about to be revealed as the messianic king. So certain were they that they could not hear him say he was going to Jerusalem not to be served, like a great king, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

Jesus will come back, but in the meantime, through God's Spirit at work in the lives of his disciples, Israel's calling to be a light to the nations is being powerfully activated.

These first followers were not cowards. If they betrayed and forsook Jesus, it was not because their courage was weak. Rather, when they saw him arrested and put on trial, their faith in him as Messiah simply drained away. They had thought he was the one who would redeem Israel and reveal God to the world.

Even as their faith was being restored through the resurrection, they were still wondering if Israel's kingdom would be restored (Acts 1:6). They were told to wait in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit, and then they would have power to be Jesus' witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In this way, and not through Israel's kingdom, would Israel's God be exalted among the nations and God's kingdom dawn.

The book of Acts describes how this begins to happen. Jesus will come back, but in the meantime, through God's Spirit at work in the lives of his disciples, Israel's calling to be a light to the nations is being powerfully activated.

"You are the salt of the earth! You are the light of the world!" (Matthew 5:13a, 14a). "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3b).

John Miller taught Bible at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., before he retired. This second in a series on the Bible originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

Advocating for refugees of life's storms

Once an illegal alien herself, MVS worker helps others

HARLINGEN, Texas—Abel Gonzales, 17, lost his 11 siblings and both of his parents in Hurricane Mitch when it ravaged his native Honduras last year. His home and his family's few possessions on their farm were washed away in one of the most devastating storms to hit Central America in years. So Gonzales decided his best bet was to head north to the "land of opportunity."

After four months of walking, hitchhiking and hiding, in February Gonzales slipped across the U.S.-Mexico border —and right into the hands of a waiting Border Patrol agent.

Now in a detention center in Los Fresnos, Texas, Gonzales is learning to read and write, as well as speak English. Olga Cantarero, the Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) local coordinator in Harlingen, devotes much attention to the center as a volunteer paralegal.

"[Gonzales] has nothing," Cantarero says. "Everything was gone, and he didn't know his mother's family in El Salvador. Because he grew up in the country on a family farm, he couldn't read or write."

Because Gonzales entered the United States after the Dec. 31, 1998, deadline for filing for Temporary Protection Status as a refugee from the hurricane, it is likely he will be deported back to Honduras. Cantarero says this would be a devastating blow to the boy.

"There are no jobs in Honduras because of the hurricane," she says. "Abel is terrified of becoming a street kid."

Being a street kid means having no place safe to sleep, no regular source of food and no one to look after him. In Central America, street kids often end up stealing or involved in prostitution to survive, Cantarero says.

She is quick to point out that Gonzales' story is not unusual, but she simply does not have the time to work as a legal advocate for all the displaced people who migrate to the United States. Cantarero is currently the only MVS worker in the Harlingen unit, and she says more workers are needed to serve as paralegal assistants.

Cantarero

"MVS in Harlingen has a good history of helping refugees and people who come to this country with nothing," Cantarero says. "I am one of those."

A native Nicaraguan, Cantarero entered the United States illegally in 1989 and eventually ended up in deportation proceedings. Thanks to the help of MVS paralegal assistants with two local agencies, Cantarero is now a legal U.S. resident and is working toward citizenship. MVS workers helped her learn English, and a number of former workers maintain regular contact with Cantarero, even though they now live throughout North America.

"The work we do in Harlingen MVS really makes a difference in people's lives," Cantarero says. "We do everything we can to help people like Abel, especially just being with them and showing that someone cares what happens to them."—*Christy Risser of GCMC and MBM news services*

Sweet work for Wisconsin church

Ken Uglum arrives at work each morning at 3, preparing donuts, rolls and specialty breads for The Donut Shop in Waukesha, Wis.

By 5 a.m., Uglum is joined by three other trainees, and together they turn out the day's confections.

All four people are participants in a transitional work program for former welfare recipients. They work under the supervision of Clarice and Lawrence Kratz, shop managers and pastors of Waukesha's Maple Avenue Mennonite Church, one of the congregations supporting the program.

Trainees are also required to attend classes on marketplace skills and attend support groups. —*Urban Connections*

Australian-New Zealand group holds first meeting

WOLLONGONG, Australia—A fledgling Anabaptist group Down Under met June 11-14, its first meeting since incorporating as a religious association a year ago.

Although there is only one Mennonite congregation in the region, the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand links Christians who identify with the Anabaptist tradition. The AAANZ was born as a network of Anabaptist adherents in 1995.

The June meeting, held in the southwest Australian coastal city of Wollongong, featured presentations by Mark and Mary Hurst and Graeme Chatfield. The Hursts, workers with Eastern Mennonite Missions itinerating in Australia and New Zealand, spoke on peacemaking and "Anabaptist Perspectives for the Church Today." Chatfield, professor at a Baptist college in Sydney, spoke on 16th-century Anabaptism.—*MWC News Service*

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Reflections

Of parchments and wrinkled cloaks

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS President

What to do with a seminary president who arrives at commencement with his gown in a plastic bag, still full of wrinkles? I was prepared to present diplomas to AMBS graduates on May 21, but at the last minute realized my cloak looked like I had used it for a sleeping bag.

Preaching prof June Alliman Yoder came to the rescue by wielding an iron. Thanks, June—and thanks to an outstanding AMBS faculty who put countless books and and other tools into service for the church throughout this last year.

Paul the apostle once had a cloak problem. To Timothy, his missionary colleague, Paul wrote: *"When you come, bring the cloak that I left at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments"* (2 Tim. 3:13).

Paul's passing reference to books and parchments gives a glimpse of his intellectual life. Paul loved learning. Trained by a prominent Jewish scholar named Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), Paul was familiar with Greek rhetoric. He had the background and skill to speak the gospel to a business woman named Lydia (Acts 16), to a senior government official (Acts 13), and to philosophers at Athens (Acts 17). Paul's scholarly training helped make him effective for the mission of the church.

AMBS offers a broad range of courses in practical areas of church life—including preaching, evangelism, counseling, and administration. Underlying these skills-based classes is a solid foundation of scholarship that stretches intellectual horizons. Current examples from AMBS profs:

- Mary Schertz is editing the work of 14 Bible scholars on the topic of peacemaking and mission in the scriptures. "Too often activists work at peace issues and evangelists work on mission efforts—but the two do not meet," Mary said. "Modern Mennonites should be energized both by peacemaking and by evangelism." The book she is editing explores passages from Genesis to Revelation that draw together peacemaking and witnessing themes.
- Karl Koop just completed a doctoral dissertation on early seventeenth-century Mennonite confessions of faith. "I learned that theology and doctrine have always been important in the Mennonite experience," Karl said. "The period I studied was a time of integration, with a lot of attention to discipline, boundaries, and defining the true church. Mennonites were in an increasingly pluralistic context. There are striking parallels to the situation of Mennonites in North America today."

On the morning of AMBS commencement, graduates gathered with faculty for a time of reflection. Senior Ken Quiring, leaving for a pastorate in Saskatchewan, summarized his seminary years this way: "At AMBS I learned to pray, and I learned to speak about Jesus without blushing."

Ken is a gifted student who immersed himself in learning. No scholarly background, though, will produce effective church leaders unless they also are rooted in prayer and able to express their faith with boldness and clarity.

I'm not concerned if your cloak gets wrinkled in the move to Canada, Ken. Just keep using the books and parchments you'll need to feed a keen mind during the challenging years of leadership that lie ahead!

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

January at AMBS

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Thirty-five students graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 21. Twenty-three received the Master of Divinity, two the Master of Arts in Peace Studies, and ten the Master of Arts in Theological Studies.

Left to right: Janet Amon, Olivia Bartel, Franklin E. Breckenridge, Sr., Sharon Brown, Deborah Byler, Brent Eash

Janet Amon MDiv. Plans in process. "AMBS has been a safe place to explore images of God, taste the love of Christ, and feel the remarkable movement of the Holy Spirit." Janet is a member of Georgetown United Methodist Church in Jenison, Michigan. She is married to Martin Amon, and they are the parents of three children. Her parents are Jack and Jean Carter of Hudsonville, Mich.

Olivia Bartel MATS in theology and ethics. Will return to AMBS to complete her studies this fall; further plans in process. "While recognizing the importance of my academic studies at AMBS, I place equal or greater value on my community experiences outside of the classroom." Olivia is a member of Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan. Her parents are Verlin and Elaine Bartel from Kansas City.

Franklin E. Breckenridge Sr. MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Community African Methodist Episcopal Church in La Porte, Ind. "My experience at AMBS has greatly expanded my knowledge of different denominations and theologians in the world. In addition, this seminary has enhanced my pastoral skills and abilities." He and Cora, his wife, are the parents of three grown children and one grandchild. He is a member of St. James A.M.E. Church in Elkhart, Ind.

Sharon Brown MATS in Christian education. "The most meaningful part of my seminary experience as been growing closer to God. Jesus' message of salvation and his call to 'come, follow me' have been brought to life in the seminary community through my studies and commitment to a life of spiritual discipline." Sharon and Jim, her husband, and their three sons will move to Lithuania this summer where she will teach in the Bible department of Lithuania Christian College. She is a member of North Leamington United Mennonite Church in Leamington, Ont.

Deborah Byler MDiv. Plans in process. "This has been an excellent place for me to process life experiences and my place in ministry through courses, friendships and spiritual direction." Deb is a member of Bethel Mennonite Church in West Liberty, Ohio. Her parents, Roy and Ruby Byler, are from West Liberty, Ohio.

Brent Eash MDiv. Plans in process. "I really appreciated the interest and encouragement given me by faculty and staff. Sharing several years of study and experience with others helped me grow." Brent is married to Heidi Eash and they are the parents of four children. He is a member of Shore Mennonite Church in Shipshewana, Ind. His parents are Ted and Darlene Eash of Bristol, Ind.

Lois Edmund *Not pictured.* MATS in biblical studies. Will continue as clinical psychologist. Lois is married to Grant Klassen and her home congregation is Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Man.

Lillian Elias MDiv. Plans in process. "This has been an opportunity to be spiritually refreshed in a stimulating community, and to sharpen skills for ministry in the church which I love." Lillian is married to Jacob W. Elias and they have three grown children. She is a member of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind. Her parents are William and Gertrude Bartel of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Lisa Enns-Bogoya MDiv. Plans in process. Will begin a one-year Clinical Pastoral Education residency at St. Joseph Medical Center in South Bend, Ind., and continue serving as associate pastor at North Goshen Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. "AMBS has offered me the environment needed to discern, test and affirm my call to pastoral ministry. I have been richly blessed by this community." Lisa is married to N. Raúl Bogoya. She is a member of North Leamington United Mennonite Church, Leamington, Ont., and an associate member of North Goshen Mennonite Church. Her parents are Ken and Rita Enns of Leamington.

Charlene Epp MDiv. Plans are in process. "Studying at AMBS included wrestling with faith issues and practical application. My ability to minister was deepened through the context of study, worship and relationships." Charlene is married to Duncan Smith and is a member of Portland Mennonite Church in Portland, Ore. Walter Epp, her father, is from Marion, S.D.

Krista Erickson MAPS Plans in process with the possibility of an internship in Eugene, Ore. "The most meaningful parts of my seminary experience have been participating in the Program of Conscientization for North Americans (PCNA) in Bogota, Columbia, and civil and victim offender mediation training and volunteer work." Her parents are Ron and Peggi Erickson of Northbrook, Ill.

Kaye Ferguson-Patton MDiv. Will become pastor of the Claypool United Methodist Church. "I feel [AMBS] was an incredible opportunity to grow both in knowledge and spirituality. The relationships that developed will long be treasured." Kaye is married to Richard Patton and they are the parents of three grown children. She is a member of North Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. Her mother is Iris Baochard of Mecosta, Mich.

Left to right: Lillian Elias, Lisa Enns-Bogoya, Charlene Epp, Krista Erickson, Kaye Ferguson-Patton

Olivia Bartel is one of ten students who received the Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree. Four others, in addition to Olivia, concentrated on theology and ethics; four pursued the concentration in biblical studies; and one the concentration in Christian education.

Greg Yantzi celebrates with his wife, Laurie, and sons, Brett, Devin and Matthew. Greg will become pastor of Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Left to right: Nancy Frey, Brenda Ginder, Marlin Good, Brent Graber, Judith Guasch

Nancy Frey MDiv. Will serve with Mennonite Board of Missions in West Africa. "Living in a community that studies together, worships together, prays together, cries and laughs together, and together seeks the will of God has been meaningful." Nancy is married to Bruce Yoder, also of the graduating class. She is a member of St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, St. Jacobs, Ont. Her parents are Amsey and Ina Frey of St. Clements, Ont.

Brenda Ginder MDiv. Will become pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Albion, Ind. "The experience of the presence of Christ through encouragement, friendship and love of the faculty, staff and students of AMBS is most meaningful to me." Brenda and Donald, her husband, are the parents of two children. She is a member of Indian Village United Methodist Church. Her father, George Brock lives in Cromwell, Ind.

Marlin Good MDiv. Plans in process. "I appreciate the continued emphasis on the Bible at AMBS. The spirituality classes have been especially important for my spiritual journey and growth." Marlin and Annetta F. Good are the parents of two children. He is a member of Faith Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. His parents are Albert and Jane Good of Elida, Ohio.

Brent Graber MATS in biblical studies. Will become Instructional Technology Assistant at AMBS. He is a member of Pleasant View Mennonite Church in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. His parents are Gary and Gloria Graber of Mt. Pleasant.

Judith Guasch MDiv. Plans in process. "Deepening my own spirituality and learning to help others in their personal relationships with God are two things that have helped guide me in the vocational direction I feel God is calling me to." Judith and Robert Guasch are the parents of two children. She is a member of the Upper Midfield Mennonite Church in Zionville, Pa. Her parents are George and Lucille Werkheiser of Allentown, Pa.

Gustav Guenther MATS in theology and ethics. Plans in process. "During my studies at AMBS I was encouraged and challenged to think in a critical and constructive manner about the beliefs and practices of the Christian church. This has been an enriching experience." Gustav is a member of the Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man. His parents are Joseph and Helena Guenther of Paraguay.

Dawn Yoder Harms *Not pictured.* MDiv. Will continue as associate pastor at Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa. "I studied at AMBS three different times over a period of fifteen years. Those years at AMBS provided rich opportunities to connect with others and deepen my faith." Dawn and Doug, her husband, have two sons. Tom and Hazel Yoder of Normal, Ill., are her parents.

Susan E. Janzen MDiv. Began as pastor of New Hope Mennonite Church in Omaha, Neb., in March. "AMBS provided me with the time, space and structure for personal reflection and spiritual growth. The past two years have changed my life." Susan is a member of Zion Mennonite Church in Elbing, Kan. She is the daughter of Herman Janzen from Newton, Kan., and the late Ruth Janzen.

Jana Jirak MDiv. Will begin as pastor of the Ashley and Bannister United Methodist Churches in Michigan. She is currently serving the Breedsville and Townline Methodist Churches in southwest Michigan. "Seminary has been a stimulating and delightful place to learn about God with brothers and sisters from diverse faith and cultural traditions." Jana's parents are Edwin and Leona Jirak of Meeker, Colo.

Maneesh Kessop MATS in theology and ethics. Will begin a master of business administration program at Ball State University, Muncie, Ind. "AMBS has given me direction on how to be an effective steward of Christ wherever I am and in whatever situations I face in the future." Maneesh is a member of Thoburn Methodist Church in Calcutta, India. His parents are Donald and Usha Kessop of Calcutta, West Bengal, India.

Katharina Koop MATS in theology and ethics. "Reflecting theologically on matters of faith and Christian living has challenged me to live and work for God's love and peace in this world." Kathy and Karl Koop

In her commencement address, Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly reflected on what it meant as a black child to learn that the Cincinnati, Ohio, parsonage her family lived in had been a station on the underground railroad. Bishop Kelly said, "There we understood that we were children of God. All the stories of my life come out of that one. God was no ghostly figure floating around. God participated in our lives. God participated in history."

Commencement

Graduates encouraged to be "power-filled witnesses"

"Witnessing is not just preaching, teaching and meditating on the Word, but seeing in the Word how we can do God's hard work in the world." With these words, commencement speaker Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly called upon the graduates of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., to be "power-filled witnesses for God's new day."

Bishop Kelly, a retired United Methodist pastor and the first African-American woman to be elected bishop of a major denomination, prayed that the graduates would be enabled to be the witnesses the world needs—to live the scriptures as well as recite them.

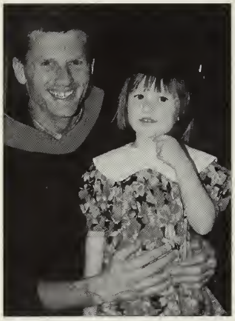
She concluded by reciting the familiar hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent Word."

Left to right: Gustav Guenther, Susan E. Janzen, Jana Jirak, Maneesh Kessop, Katharina Koop

are the parents of four children. She is a member of Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. Her parents are Johann and Anna-Maria Plett of Bechterdissen, Germany.

Jeff Nixa *Not pictured.* MDiv. Plans in process. Jeff has appreciated "the great spaciousness of AMBS's spirit, within which to explore vocation, denominational identity, spiritual growth, community, scripture study, peace issues and God's activity in my life." Jeff is married to Regina Wilson and they have two children. He is a member of the St. Joseph Catholic Church in South Bend, Ind. His parents are Muriel Nixa and Don Nixa of Rochester, Minn.

Kaye Ferguson-Patton received the Master of Divinity degree. She will become pastor of the Claypool United Methodist Church. Kay is one of seven United Methodist students who graduated from AMBS this year, representing the United Methodist Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.



Ken Quiring shares his mortarboard with his daughter Alison. Ken, his wife, Yolanda, and daughters Angelica and Alison welcomed a new daughter, Adriana, to the family just a week before graduation.

Left to right: Samuel Nsengiyumva, Ken Quiring, Virgil Sauder, Todd Schlosser, Rhoda Schrag

Samuel Nsengiyumva. MAPS Plans in process. "My studies at AMBS have equipped me with the knowledge and skills I need to serve as an agent of peace, justice and reconciliation." Samuel is originally from Rwanda and his wife, Marie Rose Nirere, and their four children are currently in Togo. He is a member of St. John's Episcopal Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Ken Quiring MDiv. Will become pastor of North Star Mennonite Church, Drake, Sask. "AMBS has been a community in which I could explore and deepen my Anabaptist Christian faith and my calling to be a pastoring person." Ken and Yolanda, his wife, are the parents of three daughters. He is a member of Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind. His parents are Irvin and Betty Quiring of Blumenort, Man.

Virgil Sauder MATS in biblical studies. Plans in process. "The seminary community has provided me with a stimulating environment for both faith and academic growth." Virgil is a member of College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. His parents are John and Lois Sauder of Goshen.

Todd Schlosser MDiv. Will become associate pastor at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Morden, Man. "Besides being the place where I met my future wife, AMBS has been a great place of renewal, growth and preparation for my future." This summer he will marry Lynn Ellwood, also a student at AMBS. He is a member of Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, Sask. He is the son of Evelyn and Dennis Schlosser of Regina.

Rhoda Schrag MDiv. Plans in process. "My call to pursue a mid-life career change was tested at AMBS. I was challenged to grow in my spiritual life, in my knowledge of scriptures, in my commitment to the church." Rhoda is a member of College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. and the mother of three grown children. Her parents are Blanche and Earl Nafziger from Archbold, Ohio.

Robert Stark *Not pictured.* MDiv. Will continue serve as pastor at the Girard and Ellis Corners United Methodist Churches. "As a non-traditional learner, it has been helpful in my learning process to be able to apply my leanings while being a full-time pastor and a part-time student." Robert is married to Mary Beth Stark and they have two grown children. He is associated with the West Michigan Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Thomas Watt MDiv. Will serve as pastor of the Alto United Methodist Church. "The development of community was a great experience for me. The AMBS community provided realistic feedback for the education provided." Tom is married to Sherry Watt and they are the parents of two children.

Laura Wiebe-Powell MDiv. with emphasis in pastoral counseling. Will seek a ministry position specializing in pastoral counseling. Laura says what was meaningful in her seminary study was "the support of the community and the direction of the advisers, friends and supportive professors." Laura and Wendell, her husband, have three sons. She is a member of Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind. Her parents are Bill and Mary Anne Powell of Salina, Kan.

Greg Yantzi MDiv. Will become pastor of Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church. "Studying the Bible in its original languages has been a faith-enriching experience. I have received a measure of God's grace that I can share with others." Greg and Laurie, his wife, have three children. He is a member of the East Zorra Mennonite Church in Tavistock, Ont. He is the son of Dorothy Yantzi of Tavistock and the late LaVerne Yantzi.

The evening before commencement, AMBS celebrates a commissioning service for all who are leaving the seminary. At the end of this service, those being honored are invited to light a candle at the front of the chapel worship area. Among those leaving at the end of this year are John C. Murray and his family, Krista, Nathan, Joel, and Meghana. John will serve as pastor of Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

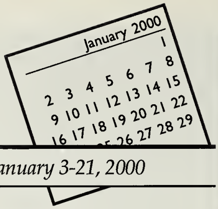
Left to right: Thomas Watt, Laura Wiebe-Powell, Greg Yantzi, Bruce Yoder, Poro (Paul) Yokota

Bruce Yoder MDiv. Will serve with Mennonite Board of Missions in West Africa. "AMBS has provided a stimulating space for acquiring skills of biblical and theological reflection, and for building relationships with others on the way, both students and staff and faculty." Bruce is married to Nancy Frey, also of the graduating class. He is a member of Martinsburg Mennonite Church in Martinsburg, Pa. His parents are Robert and Wilma Yoder of Martinsburg.

Poro (Paul) Yokota MATS in biblical studies. Will begin further graduate studies in New Testament at St. Andrews University in Scotland. "Biblical studies at AMBS are wonderful. They gave me not only the basic skills to read the Bible but also a map for where I want to go." Paul is married to Chiharu Yokota. He is a member of the Fukuoka Church, Fukuoka, Japan. His parents are Takeyuki and Chiyoko Yokota of Fukuoka.

Lisa Enns-Bogoya received the Master of Divinity degree. She will continue as associate pastor of North Goshen Mennonite Church and do a one-year residency in Clinical Pastoral Education, while her husband, N. Raúl, will complete his Master of Divinity degree.

January at AMBS



Interterm *January 3-21, 2000*

Congregational Spirituality
Marlene Kropf and Marcus Smucker, AMBS
Non-violence and Christian Faith
Ted Koontz, AMBS
Pauline Theology and Ethics
Jacob Elias, AMBS
Peace and Justice: Latin American Perspective
Mario Higueros, Dean, SEMILLA (Latin-America Anabaptist Seminary, Guatemala). Course meets in Guatemala.
Global Urbanization and Mission
Art McPhee, AMBS (study tour to India and Thailand)
Marriage, Family and Pastoral Care *(January 10-21)*
John and Naomi Lederach, previously senior clinicians at Philhaven Hospital
Mennonite Church Polity *(January 10-21)*
Erick Sawatzky, AMBS

For more information, contact Ruth Ann Gardner, registrar

Pastors' Week *January 24-27, 2000*

Bringing them in without selling out:
Evangelism and Peace

About the theme:
The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of peace, and calling people to Christ in light of the message of peace and justice is something Mennonites can contribute to the broader Christian witness. Can we retell our congregation's stories of peacemaking as stories of evangelism?

Presenters:
Calvin Shenk, professor in Bible and Religion, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.
Michael Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle, The Bronx, New York

Worship leaders:
Ray and Marilyn Houser Hamm, Neu Bergthal, Man.

For more information, contact Diane Zaerr, 219 296-6222 or dzaerr@ambs.edu

Leadership Clinics *January 28, 2000*

Enhancing Ministry and Bible Study with a Computer
Perry B. Yoder, AMBS
Worship Planning for Lent 2000
Marlene Kropf, AMBS
Is Bigger Really Better?
Erick Sawatzky, AMBS

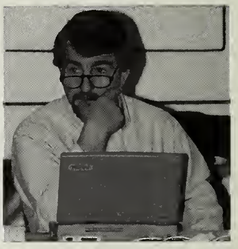
For more information, contact Diane Zaerr, 219 296-6222 or dzaerr@ambs.edu

AMBS Panorama

AMBS board members

Eighteen members serve on the AMBS Board: James Beitler, Jr., Robert Carlson, Mervin S. Good, Alvin Isaacs, Victor D. Kliewer, Ella Mae Lehman, James C. Longacre, Teresa Moser, Robert Peters, Lois Thieszen Preheim, Margaret Loewen Reimer, Don Rheinheimer, George Schmidt, Tim Schrag, Margaret Richer Smith, Rick Stiffney, Phil G. Yoder and Karen Martens Zimmerly.

Several members of the AMBS board were honored as they attended their last board meetings, June 3-5. Leaving the board are Alvin Isaacs, Ella Mae Lehman, James C. Longacre, Don Rheinheimer, Lois Thieszen Preheim and Phil G. Yoder.



Above are scenes from the June meetings of the AMBS board, featuring Robert Peters, Phil Yoder and Don Rheinheimer in the top photos, and James Longacre and Lois Thieszen Preheim with AMBS President Nelson Kraybill in the bottom photo. Don Rheinheimer has served as secretary and James Longacre as vice chairperson of the board.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Page 1 and graduate groups by Steve Echols; other photos pp. 3-8 by Mary E. Klassen

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Summer 1999

Associated
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Biblical
Seminary

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http://www.ambs.edu

Recent success of MCC material resources appeals prompts concerns about effect on long-term work

WINNIPEG—In the last nine months, intense media interest in natural and human-made disasters has helped generate an enthusiastic public response to Mennonite Central Committee's relief efforts. While the outpouring of hurricane and refugee kits and financial contributions have increased the scope of MCC's assistance, the response has also led to some institutional soul-searching.

MCC has received 44,000 kits for Kosovar refugees, surpassing the agency's initial goal by 50 percent. Financial contributions have reached $1.8 million, twice what was expected. Earlier, supporters filled 50,000 hurricane kits and gave $2.7 million in cash following Hurricane Mitch in Latin America, again far surpassing expectations.

"Are material resources out of control?" MCC Canada director Marv Frey asked at a June 18-19 MCC executive committee meeting in Winnipeg.

MCC is expected to respond to disasters, said Willie Reimer, director of MCC's food and material resources program. "People want us to ship [food and other resources]," he said. "However, we need to be mindful of the places that need help and that CNN is not showing.

"As long as the quality [of the material resources] is strong, let's continue doing it. The quality remains strong. Right now we're handling it. We're stressed, but the quality is still there."

Media attention to MCC's responses to disasters has generated more interest in the agency. Hurricane Mitch produced 5,000 new contributors for MCC Manitoba's list of donors. Hurricane Mitch resulted in 13,000 new donors from across the United States.

Some committee members cautioned that short-term relief should not detract from longer-term programs such as peacemaking. "We should continue to invest in working at the root causes [of conflict]," said Dave Cressman.

Relief was also discussed in the context of MCC building "capacity" with its partners overseas. When delivering material resources, MCC is often building capacity or building peace, Reimer said. MCC is helping build capacity at the church agency it works with in Albania by being sensitive to its desire for autonomy. By providing food to both Serbian refugees and Albanian refugees, MCC is working at long-term peace.

In other meeting business, the executive committee learned that MCC's Food, Disaster and Material Resource Department is beginning to examine the issue of biotechnology and its potential to affect the food industry around the globe. Biotechnology—manipulating the genes of plants, animals and humans—has existed for many years, producing plant varieties such as canola, an oil seed-producing crop widely grown on the Canadian prairies, and sensations such as Dolly, the cloned British sheep.

The committee also discussed government grants. Canadian government grants have totaled more than $75 million during the past 10 years. Much of that money was spent on MCC programs overseas.—*Rick Fast of MCC News Service*

Dutch printer turns to saving windmills

Dutch Mennonite businessman Kees Knijnenberg didn't wait long to find work in retirement. On the same day last year he stepped down from his family's 135-year-old printing company, he was recruited to head a foundation preserving the windmills that played a key economic role among Mennonites in the Netherlands. A dozen such windmills survive where hundreds used to dot the countryside.

Knijnenberg was heavily involved in the 1996 celebration of the 500th anniversary of Menno Simons' birth, and his printing company helped publish a book on the life of the early Anabaptist leader.—*The Marketplace*

Ten Thousand Villages restructuring progresses

AKRON, Pa.—Plans to make Ten Thousand Villages a separately incorporated nonprofit organization owned by Mennonite Central Committee have been affirmed by both organizations' governing bodies. The proposal now waits for final approval from MCC Canada in November and the MCC annual meeting in February 2000.

The proposal gives Ten Thousand Villages the ability to set its own personnel policies and business plans. At the same time, Ten Thousand Villages would remain a part of MCC and continue to use MCC volunteers. MCC would also appoint a majority of the board and approve the selection of the executive director and the organizational bylaws.—*MCC News Service*

Paul Groff

White House witness

In a July 4 event organized by First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va., more than 75 people stood facing the White House in Washington and sangs hymns of peace. The group, which also distributed leaflets, included Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Voluntary Service workers, vacationers from Kansas and members of the Sojourners community in Washington.

Mission changes mean EMM changes

SALUNGA, Pa.—In response to global missions shifts and population trends, Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) will create two departments, focusing on sharing about Jesus with those who have not yet heard, strengthening relationships with established churches and partnering with emerging mission groups to spread the gospel.

The new departments of Global Ministries and Human Resources are to be up and running by Dec. 31, while EMM's Overseas Ministries and Home Ministries departments will be discontinued.

Global Ministries will oversee long-term work worldwide, pooling international programs and those in the United States. While region-specific administration will likely continue in some cases, EMM president Richard Showalter projects the development of ministry-oriented administration, such as an urban missions administrator who could oversee all such outreach around the world.

"Because we have worked for so long in two distinct departments, the learnings from overseas have often been unavailable to our work at home and vice versa," Showalter says. "Home ministries will happen more thoroughly in the context of what we're doing around the world."

Former Home Ministries director Mervin Charles has been appointed to lead Global Ministries.

Also part of EMM's program redesign is the creation of a centralized Human Resources department to serve both long- and short-term workers. This brings together efforts previously approached departmentally. Jay Garber has been appointed Human Resources director. He was EMM's director for Overseas Personnel from 1991 to 1998.

EMM's third program department, Discipleship Ministries, will continue overseeing short-term work around the world.

"This is a continuation of what has been a part of EMM's core values from the beginning, but we recognize that we're carrying this vision now into a new era," Showalter says. "The context has dramatically changed within the last decade. That calls for a new response."

The number of people who have never heard about Jesus continues to rise around the globe, Showalter says, due to "enormous population growth, coupled with vast areas where the church remains weak or nonexistent."

A second stimulus for EMM's restructuring, Showalter says, is a historic shift as churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America are sending increased numbers of missionaries. "Christian mission, like never before, is truly global in its points of origin," he says.—*Kristin Oberholtzer of EMM News Service*

Correction: One person was killed in a June 4 tornado on South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The number was incorrect in the June 22 issue of *The Mennonite.*

Kansas man automatic for camp

MURDOCK, Kan.—Delon Martens first counseled at Camp Mennoscah near Murdock the summer after his junior year in high school. That was 1968, and he has been back every year since.

For 25 consecutive summers Martens has directed a pre-junior camp at Mennoscah, which is owned by Western District Conference. He has directed camps as long as he has been married. He and his bride, Joretta, spent a week at Mennoscah in 1973, only a week after they tied the knot. Two summers ago, their sons, Jason and Brent, served as counselors under their dad.

"Some of the campers that I've had have returned as counselors, or they have sent their own children to my camp," says Martens, who grew up near Inman, Kan., and now lives at Haven, Kan. "For many of us—my own sons included—Camp Mennoscah is just a very special place."—*Western District News*

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Everyone in your congregation can read about St. Louis 99 and the decisions made there—even if they don't already receive *The Mennonite*. We are printing extra copies of this special edition for just this reason.

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AMBS makes administrative appointments

ELKHART, Ind.—Nelson Kraybill has been reappointed to a second three-year term as president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. The AMBS board took the action during its June meeting. The board also appointed John Duerksen as director of development.

Kraybill became AMBS president in 1997 following nine years in London with Mennonite Board of Missions. His second term will begin in January 2000.

Duerksen has served on the AMBS development staff since 1992, most recently as associate director of development. His new assignment began July 1.

MBM, Mennonite Brethren join media efforts

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Mission's Mennonite Media department will get a new director as a result of a new cooperative effort between Mennonite Media and a Canadian Mennonite Brethren organization.

Burton Buller, executive director of MBC/Family Life Network since 1994, will also provide administrative leadership for Mennonite Media. MBC/Family Life Network is the communication agency of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba. Buller will succeed Ken Weaver, who will retire on July 31 after 43 years with Mennonite Media.

Under a new relationship which took effect July 1, MBC/Family Life Network will become the Canadian distributor for Mennonite Media resources, and Mennonite Media videos will appear in the new MBC/Family Life Network catalog.—*MBM News Service*

Special projects boost EMU to giving record

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, received $5.7 million in gift income during the 1998-99 fiscal year, setting a record for contributions. The previous record was $4.26 million, set during the 1997-98 fiscal year.

Richard L. Gunden, vice president for advancement, cited contributions to the school's University Commons building project as a major factor in setting the record. According to unaudited figures, EMU received $4.53 million in restricted funds, such as those designated for building projects. Also boosting the restricted funds was a $1.3 million grant for Eastern Mennonite Seminary from Lilly Endowment.

EMU also received $1.17 million in undesignated gifts last year.

Europeans observe 50 years of peace work

BASEL, Switzerland—A May symposium at the former European Mennonite Bible School near Basel commemorated the 50th anniversary of a European peace movement.

The Church and Peace movement traces its origins to the first meeting of the European Historic Peace Churches Continuation Committee in 1949. The committee, composed of North American Mennonites and Brethren, British Quakers and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, assembled at the invitation of the World Council of Churches for a post-World War II discussion of theology of war and peace. The movement today includes 44 member churches and other organizations.—*MCC News Service*

Hesston receives $1.28 million challenge grant

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College has received a check for $1.28 million from the Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla., the largest gift in the school's history. The money, which was a challenge grant, came as a result of Hesston successfully raising nearly $3 million as part of a capital campaign. The money will help fund $8.5 million worth of campus renovation and construction projects.

by the way ...

During its 90 years of publication, *Gospel Herald* printed obituaries of some 53,600 people. —*The Burning Bush*

Using his head

Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School instructors Vernon Rice (standing) and Duane Evans demonstrate heading the ball during the school's girls soccer camp. The LMHS summer camp program registered 425 stduents in basketball, field hockey and soccer.

Births

Alderfer, Candace Brooke and Ciara Faith (twins), June 11, to Kevin and Teresa (Allebach) Alderfer, Hatfield, Pa.

Beachy, Steven Lee, June 22, to Dean and Linda (Meader) Beachy, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

Benson, Colton Michael, June 20, to Lanee (Nofziger) and Mike Benson, Archbold, Ohio.

Delong, Ethan Lee, July 1, to Allison (Clemmer) and Sean Delong, Green Lane, Pa.

Derstine, Zackary Alan, June 28, to Jeffrey and Lori (Hostelley) Derstine, Sellersville, Pa.

Friesen, Dominic José, June 25, to Angela (Franz) and José Friesen, Omaha, Neb.

Garman, Cooper Wayne and Janson Lee (twins), July 1, to Kristin (Estergard) and Rod Garman, Topeka, Kan.

Kayne, David Adam, May 16, Laurie (Hardwick) and Paul Kayne, Lawrenceville, N.J.

Kerns, Nathan Silverthorne, June 2, to Alyssa (Silverthorne) and Rob Kerns, Line Lexington, Pa.

Lindenmeyer, Jacob Paul, May 25, to Daniel and Julie (Unruh) Lindenmeyer, Newton, Kan.

Penner, Claire Elizabeth, June 21, to Martha (Neufeld) and Todd Penner, Alexandria, Va.

Regier, Emily Hope, June 18, to Julie (Ott) and Nathan Regier, Newton, Kan.

Smeall, Courtney Kay, June 29, to Angie (Siebert) and Melvin Smeall, Omaha, Neb.

Sneary, Justus Keith, June 23, to Shannon (Martens) and Wayne Sneary, Bridgewater, Va.

Stutzman, Chelsea Lynn, May 9, to Bruce and Janel (Campbell) Stutzman, Milford, Neb.

Unzicker, Clara Lorraine, June 29, to Keith and Shannon (Musselman) Unzicker, Eureka, Ill.

Weaver, Quinten Cordel, June 9, to Dean and Shelby (Martin) Weaver, Lebanon, Pa.

Marriages

Barkey/Walters: Mark Barkey, Orillia, Ont., and Mary Walters, Atwood, Ont., June 26 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Beilstein/Martin: Fannie Beilstein, Waterloo, Ont., and Wayne Martin, Hawkesville, Ont., June 19 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Crofutt/Newcomer: Darrell Crofutt, Apollo, Pa., and Beth Newcomer, Scottdale, Pa., June 19 at Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale.

Delagrange/Fehr: Craig Delagrange, Roanoke, Ill., and Katie Fehr, Eureka, Ill., June 26 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Dully/Kennell: Derek Dully, Eureka, Ill., and Lisa Kennell, Roanoke, Ill., June 5, at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Epp/Miller: Christopher Epp, Newton, Kan., and Jacqueline Miller, Newton, June 19 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Esau/Zerger: Heather Esau, Minneapolis, and Jonathan Zerger, Ypsilanti, Mich., May 29 at Bethel College Chapel, North Newton, Kan.

Hartzler/LeMieux: Jeff Hartzler, Goshen, Ind., and Alison LeMieux, Ligonier, Ind., May 29 at St. John's Catholic Church, Goshen.

Hartzler/Zook: Rhonda Hartzler, Manheim, Pa., and Pret Zook, Lebanon, Pa., May 29 at Gingrich Mennonite Church, Lebanon, Pa.

Hixon/Luginbill: Tony Hixon, Leipsic, Ohio, and Keri Luginbill, Pandora, Ohio, June 26 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Hoffer/Kauffman: Kent Hoffer, Lebanon, Pa., and Melonica Kauffman, Lancaster, Pa., June 12 at Gingrich Mennonite Church, Lebanon.

Nafziger/Springer: Amy Nafziger, Archbold, Ohio, and Ross Springer, Carlisle, Pa., June 26 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Neufeld/Slemmer: Kristi Neufeld, Salt Lake City, and Jonathan Slemmer, Camarillo, Calif., June 5 at North Newton, Kan.

Van Wagner/Wyse: Mark Van Wagner, Denver, and Darcey Wyse, Denver, May 22 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Deaths

Afflerbach, Evelyn, 90, Pennsburg, Pa., died June 29. Spouse: Jacob Afflerbach (deceased). Parents: Erwin and Carrie Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Everett, Marshall; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 2 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Brenneman, Eunice Davidhizar, 65, Stuarts Draft, Va., died June 15 of cancer. Spouse: David Brenneman. Parents: Joseph Davidhizar (deceased) and Kathryn Davidhizar Schneider; stepfather: Laverne Schneider. Funeral: June 18 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

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Byler, Ella, 78, Belleville, Pa., died June 25. Spouse: Willie Byler (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Fanny Sharp Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children John, Loren, Darrel, Glenn, Marlin, Jeff, Esther Peachey, Wanda Delp, Mary Hostetler; 22 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Detweiler, Mabel Histand, 63, Blooming Glen, Pa., died June 16. Spouse: Ernest Detweiler. Parents: Daniel and Nora Huddle Histand. Other survivors: children Ray, Loren. Funeral: June 19 at Perkasie, Pa.

Kauffman, Margaret Gingerich, 84, Glendale, Ariz., died June 29 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Edward Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Volina Gingerich (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Mary Hershberger, Willis, Rebecca Purvis; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 3 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Kauffman, Pauline, 67, Middlebury, Ind., died June 19 of cancer. Parents: Norman and Irma Birkey Kauffman (deceased). Funeral: June 22 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Mellinger, Mildred Frey, 93, Glendale, Ariz., died May 29. Spouse: Howard Mellinger. Parents: Daniel and Edith Nice Frey (deceased). Other survivors: children Edith Troyer, Erwin, Leonard; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill.

Nolt, Amos, 82, Mount Joy, Pa., died June 25. Spouse: Grace Breneman Nolt. Parents: Joseph and Nettie Martin Nolt (deceased). Other survivors: children Sarah Werning, Ruth Ann Yost, Frances Stauffer, James; 12 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Mount Joy Mennonite Church.

Overholt, Mary Rush, 71, Souderton, Pa., died June 3 of meningioma. Spouse: Lester Overholt (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Barbara Rush (deceased). Survivors: children Lucille Eberly, Beverly Schloneger, Mary Lou Miller, David, Dale; eight grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at Perkasie, Pa.

Replogle, Sara Kathryn Honsaker, 83, Martinsburg, Pa., died June 24 of a stroke. Spouse: Jesse Replogle. Parents: Ray and Nora Metzler Honsaker (deceased). Other survivors: children Joan Ritchey, Donna Davis, Pauline Yerty, Roger, George; 11 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Martinsburg.

Schmidt, Herbert, 95, North Newton, Kan., died June 8. Spouse: Mariam Penner Schmidt (deceased). Parents: John and Elizabeth Schmidt (deceased). Survivors: daughter Susan Rhoades; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 11 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Schwartzentruber, Sylvia Kipfer, 88, Milverton, Ont., died June 9 of cancer. Spouse: David Schwartzentruber (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Nancy Nafziger Kipfer (deceased). Stepmother: Katie Kipfer (deceased). Survivors: children Glenn, Dave, Orval, Don, Marcella Martin, Marlene Schultz; 19 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Smith, Albert, 76, Listowel, Ont., died May 4 of cancer. Spouse: Norma Diller Smith. Parents: Joseph and Sarah Reesor Smith (deceased). Survivors: children Karen, Murray, Denise; six grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Listowel (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

classifieds

- **East Goshen Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a pastoral team member with emphasis on ***youth and young adults***. Contact Search Team, East Goshen Mennonite Church, 17861 SR 4, Goshen, IN 46528; email egmenno@npcc.net; web site eastgoshen.in.us.mennonite.net

- **Zion Mennonite Church**, Archbold, Ohio, is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor*** with the primary focus on pastoral care and small groups, also assisting with preaching and worship planning.

  Send resume or inquiry to Barnaby Wyse, 432 Clover Lane, Archbold, OH 43502; 419-445-0083; email Barnabyrw@juno.com

- **Association of Anabaptist Risk Management** (AARM), serving Anabaptist nonprofits, seeks a ***president CEO*** from a Lancaster, Pa., base. Strong background in insurance and/or financial management required, along with strong leadership and communication skills.

  Send resumes and direct inquiries to Henry Rosenberger, Box 313, Blooming Glen, PA 18911; fax 215-453-2905.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 325) invites applications for part-time high school teaching positions for 1999-2000 in ***biology*** (50-60%, one-year term), ***home economics*** (50%) and ***social studies*** (40-50%). For candidates with suitable qualifications, two of these assignments could be combined for one full-time position.

  Please forward resume to Allan Dueck, principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueck@hotmail.com

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a ***one-year voluntary service assignment*** beginning in mid-August 1999. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

  Contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Walnut Hills Retirement Community**, Walnut Creek, Ohio, seeks a ***director of nursing***, an opportunity for an RN with gifts/interest in management and older adults to join the team at Walnut Hills by fall 1999. The 102-resident nursing home, established in 1971, is owned and managed by Mennonites and the 150 associates reflect the Christian values of this community.

  Contact David Miller, pres/adm, P.O. Box 127, Walnut Creek, OH 44687; 330-893-3200; email whills@tusco.net

- **Garden Valley Church** ***40th anniversary celebration:*** Sept. 4-5, Garden City, Kansas; 888-866-7410; email gardenvalleychurch@juno.com

- **Western Mennonite School** has open positions for fall 1999:

  Salaried full-time: Girls resident director

  Salaried part-time teaching: Spanish, ESL, art, math and accounting

  VS positions: Assistant boys resident director, maintenance assistant, assistant cook.

  Stipend: Soccer coach, girls volleyball coach, bus driver

  Contact Darrel White, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Franconia Mennonite Conference**, Souderton, Pa., seeks confident, creative person with Anabaptist perspective to develop unique position with Franconia Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Resources Network (MRN) as ***communications coordinator***. Initial one-year position involves producing Franconia Conference News and other communications, as well as developing new MRN communications and news service. Seeking skills in writing, layout and photography.

  Apply by mailing resume to Jana Hostetter, Human Resource Manager, Box 116, Souderton, PA 18964; fax 215-721-1211; email janah@MRN.org

- **Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School** seeks a full-time faculty member to serve in the ***mathematics education program***. Responsibilities include providing leadership to the graduate mathematics education program; teaching mathematics education courses in master's degree and in the preservice, graduate-level teacher education program; advising master's projects/theses, supervising student teachers; working with graduate marketing division to recruit and enroll new students; presenting/leading workshops for mathematics educators in conference settings and school districts as desired and as opportunity presents; opportunity to contribute to the work of the AIMS Education Foundation in curriculum development for K-9 science and integrated math/science including training AIMS presenters. Required qualifications include experience teaching in K-12 setting; strong content in mathematics at least at the master's degree level; interest in writing curricular materials; demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and to integrate theory with practice; Christian commitment and lifestyle in agreement with university's doctrinal positions; commitment to integration of faith and the academic discipline. Desired qualifications include college or university teaching experience and a doctorate or ABD. An appointment will be made as soon as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University, in its hiring practices, does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap.

  Contact Howard J. Loewen, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Tri-County Mennonite Homes** is seeking a full-time ***coordinator of gift planning services***. This corporate office position will focus on developing gift planning to assist the program divisions, serving seniors and developmentally challenged adults, in fulfilling their mission and objectives. The successful candidate will possess knowledge/ability in charitable gift planning, fund-raising, public speaking, preparing newsletters and computer literacy.

  Please forward a resume by Aug. 31, 1999, to Tri-County Mennonite Homes, 200 Boullee St., New Hamburg, ON N0B 2G0; fax 519-662-2284. (Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.)

- **Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School** seeks a full-time faculty member to serve in the ***science education program***. Responsibilities include providing leadership to the graduate science education program; teaching science education courses in master's degree and in the preservice, graduate-level teacher education program; advising master's projects/theses, supervising student teachers; working with graduate marketing division to recruit and enroll new students; presenting/leading workshops for mathematics educators in conference settings and school districts as desired and as opportunity presents; opportunity to contribute to the work of the AIMS Education Foundation in curriculum development for K-9 science and integrated math/science including training AIMS presenters and writing for the AIMS magazine. Required qualifications include experience teaching in K-12 setting; strong content in life and/or earth sciences at least at the master's degree level; interest in writing curricular materials; demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and to integrate theory with practice; Christian commitment and lifestyle in agreement with university's doctrinal positions; commitment to integration of faith and the academic discipline. Desired qualifications include college or university teaching experience and a doctorate or ABD. An appointment will be made as soon as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University, in its hiring practices, does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap.

  Contact Howard J. Loewen, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023.

- **Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School** seeks a faculty member to serve in the ***technology education program***. One-year position with the possibility of renewal. Responsibilities include working with the technology education program faculty to assist with administering partnership technology education grants in school districts; teaching science education courses in master's degree and in the preservice, graduate-level teacher education program; advising master's projects/theses, supervising student teachers; working with graduate marketing division to recruit and enroll new students; presenting/leading workshops for mathematics educators in conference settings and school districts as desired and as opportunity presents; opportunity to contribute to the work of the AIMS Education Foundation in curriculum development for K-9 science and integrated math/science including training AIMS presenters and writing for the AIMS magazine. Required qualifications include experience teaching in K-12 setting; strong content in life and/or earth sciences at least at the master's degree level; interest in writing curricular materials; demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and to integrate theory with practice; Christian commitment and lifestyle in agreement with university's doctrinal positions; commitment to integration of faith and the academic discipline. Desired qualifications include college or university teaching experience and a doctorate or ABD. An appointment will be made as soon as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University, in its hiring practices, does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap.

  Contact Howard J. Loewen, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city elementary school, is in search of a ***3rd/4th-grade*** classroom teacher. Applicants with teacher training and experience will be given preference. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 16, 1999. For more information or to request application materials, contact Marvin Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

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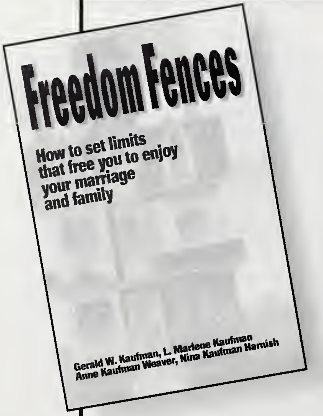
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This resources column will appear periodically as a way to pass on information to our readers about new books and other resources that may be helpful to us as we follow Jesus together. We will also include our own recommendations of books (see right).

Window to the World: Extraordinary Stories From a Century of Overseas Mission, compiled and written by Tina Block Ediger (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $19.95), tells stories of people whose lives were positively affected by the witness of General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries. The book contains more than 200 black and white photographs, plus a 16-page center section of color photos.

The Family Read-Aloud Collection, written by Bob Hartman, illustrated by Doug Oudekerk (Augsburg Fortress, 1999, $15.99 each), features four volumes of stories about Christian explorers and heroes from around the globe. Each volume includes 15 stories.

Service with a Smile by Daniel Wray (Meriwether, 885 Elkton Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80907, $12.95) includes 52 humorous sketches for Sunday worship.

The Spiritual Formation Bible (Zondervan, 1999) offers five "entry points" into the text: quotations from respected Christians, fivefold questions, Franciscan reading, Ignatian reading and "lectio divina." Text is available in either NIV or NRSV.

A Christian View of Money by Mark Vincent (Herald Press, 1999, $9.99) combines Bible study, real life scenarios and practical suggestions to help Christians clarify their beliefs about the earning and use of money.

Soul of a Citizen: Living With Conviction in a Cynical Time by Paul Rogat Loeb (St. Martin's Press, 1999, $15.95) reveals how ordinary citizens are making their voices heard and actions count in a time when we are told neither matter.

Congregations and Pastors: Reflections on the Work of the Church by John A. Esau (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $12.95) addresses how congregations and pastors can work effectively together to fulfill the church's mission.

The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical by John Howard Yoder (Herald Press, 1998, $19.99), first published in 1994, includes a selected bibliography of Yoder's work on ecclesiology and ecumenism.

People Behind the Peace: Community and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland by Ronald A. Wells (Eerdmans, 1999, $13) shows how Christian witness can have lasting societal and political impact.

Dying for a Drink: A Pastor and a Physician Talk About Alcoholism by Alexander DeJong and Martin Doot (CRC Publications and Eerdmans, 1999, $8) recounts the story of a pastor's successful journey of recovery from the disease of alcoholism.

On the Pilgrim's Way: Conversations on Christian Discipleship by J. Nelson Kraybill (Herald Press, 1999, $15.99) records insights from Scripture and the author's 140-mile walk along the Pilgrim's Way in England.

The Wind Won't Know Me by Emily Benedek (University of Oklahoma Press, 1999, $17.95) is a history of the Navajo-Hopi land dispute.

Peter Riedemann's Hutterite Confession of Faith, translated and edited by John J. Friesen (Herald Press, 1999, $16.99), is Volume 9 of the Classics of the Radical Reformation series.

Rogues, Rascals & Rare Gems by Danny Unrau (Kindred Productions, 1999, $7.95) offers stories of everyday people looking for an everyday God.

Recommended reading

The Shape of Living: Spiritual Directions for Everyday Life by David F. Ford (Baker, 1999, $12.99) is a remarkably thorough yet accessible look at what shapes how we live. Ford, a theologian, acknowledges that people today feel overwhelmed, and he calls us "to stretch our minds, hearts and imaginations in trying to find and invent shapes of living." He looks at seven areas that shape us, deftly using Scripture, stories and excerpts from contemporary poet Micheal O'Siadhail. This is a book to savor.—*Gordon Houser*

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Gordon Houser

Crazy time

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.—1 John 4:18a

Even though we say we believe this Scripture, even though we proclaim that God's love is more powerful than anything, we often fail to believe it in our guts. Usually something has to remove us from our normal, fear-filled world to awaken us to the reality of God's perfect love.

James Van Tholen, a 33-year-old pastor, discovered this when he learned he had terminal cancer. According to a story in *Christianity Today* (May 24), after a seven-month absence from his congregation, he preached a sermon in which he confessed that he felt fear, not of dying but of meeting God. He gained a new understanding of God's scandalous grace. He said, "The grace of Jesus Christ carries us beyond every cancer, every divorce, every sin, every trouble that comes to us."

What do we fear? Why? Do we fear God?

The most oft-given command in Scripture is, "Do not fear." Some version of that occurs more than 120 times the Bible.

Fear blinds us to God's love. And God's love, as 1 John tells us, casts out fear. The more we experience God's love, the less we experience fear. It doesn't work to pretend we're not afraid. We need to face our fears. And it's often when we have to face the worst, like when a loved one dies, that we find ourselves in "crazy time."

Often the best response to life, and what can lead us into crazy time, is tears. The person of prayer is someone who can cry from the heart and laugh from the belly.

This phrase comes from certain Native cultures and refers to time in which nothing looks like what we're used to. We get used to what we call normalcy, the way things are. Life becomes problem-solving, fixing, explaining and taking sides with winners and losers. But in order to be transformed we need to be drawn into a sacred space, a threshold between an old world we've left behind and a new one we're not sure of yet.

In his book *Everything Belongs* (Crossroad, 1999), Richard Rohr describes this space as "the realm where God can best get at us because we are out of the way." If we don't find this space in our lives, Rohr writes, "we start idolizing normalcy. We end up believing it's the only reality, and our lives shrivel."

How do we get there? The most common ways are prayer and suffering. So much that happens on earth cannot be fixed or explained but can only be felt and suffered. Often the best response to life, and what can lead us into crazy time, is tears. Someone has said, "A young man who cannot cry is a savage, and an old man who cannot laugh is a fool." The person of prayer is someone who can cry from the heart and laugh from the belly.

When my father died a few years ago, I felt at times I was in a different world. In those times I no longer worried about who won the ball games or what others thought of me. Grieving is often a time when we are freest of fear, when we best experience God's Spirit.

Rosemary Lynch is a Franciscan nun who works with refugees and poor people in Las Vegas as well as against nuclear weapons. She tells about hearing a hymn as a child that begins, "O Lord, I am not worthy," but she heard it a different way and sang, "O Lord, I am not worried." By changing one word she placed herself in crazy time.

Living in crazy time is living without fear. It's not static or permanent but comes and goes. A famous icon depicts St. George slaying a dragon. George was a man who openly proclaimed his Christian belief during a time of persecution. The icon represents George slaying the beast of fear. We slay our dragons of fear with the lance of belief in God's love, which casts out fear.

Too much of religion tries to help us adjust to our "normal" world, a world filled with fear and mistrust. Christ calls us not to leave the physical world but to be free of its bondage, to experience in our guts the reality of God's grace. When we know that perfect love, we reach out in love to our brothers and sisters (1 John 4:20-21). God's fearless love is amazing and—to the world's way of thinking—crazy. Believing in that love will transform us.—*gh*

the Mennonite

July 27, 1999

values and faith in business

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Declaring the power of God

We can make a difference. That was our conviction recently as we met at the church to go on a prayer walk in the neighborhood. We filled little bottles with grape juice, the same kind we use for Communion, and hit the streets. As we walked up and down the streets we sprinkled the juice, symbolically declaring that the blood of Christ had already been spilled for the people who lived there. We renounced the bloodshed that continues. As we came to spots of known violence, we stopped and blessed them.

At one such spot a youth had been killed. I suddenly realized that I was stepping on a symbol of the violence: a chalk drawing of a youth with a cigarette in his mouth, a cross at his neck and a revolver in his hand with a bullet shooting out at another person. We erased the drawing and sprinkled Christ's blood over the top. I was appalled at how many sites of violence we came to: an old man who had been shot, a wife who had her husband killed, a drug exchange point, a child molester, an incestuous father, a shoot-out, a site where several people had been assaulted. The list went on. And all in about half a kilometer square around our church, where most of our members live.

As in so many places, the culture of violence is the culture of youth. I reflected with gratefulness as we walked that of the 10 of us, three were young teenagers. Surely God is raising them up to make a difference in their generation. Last night at a prayer vigil of 16 people, six were teens. They chose to spend their Friday night praying until 4 a.m. with a bunch of adults from church. And pray they did. When we choose to face the evil around us instead of avoiding it, Satan loses ground in the battle. Our God is more powerful, and we must declare it to be so. Light your light shine. Make a difference.—*Janet and Steve Plenert, Ceilandia, Brazil*

Balancing act

There may be Mennonites who have an approach to life that denies the reality of evil and pain. The July 13 editorial ("The Stories Are in the Struggle, Not the Scandal") connects with that. To be realistic about our Christian walk and faithful to *The Mennonite*'s commitment to serve "the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference and Mennonite Church," the magazine will need to keep trying for a balance of the two. I feel it does that quite well.—*Ellis Croyle, Goshen, Ind.*

Blood and death

I was sorry to see that no one wrote with a clear amen to Perry Bush's article on how Mennonites relate to the Fourth of July ("Christian Propriety and the Fourth of July," June 22). He described my feelings exactly, that we are "onlookers at someone else's party. We don't feel at home." I am a Mennonite by choice, drawn by our shared commitment to peace, and I hate to see that weakening.

I especially find it impossible to let one other comment pass. The idea that freedom is almost always purchased by bloodshed is true, but to compare man's wars to Jesus on the cross is, to me, unthinkable. When we send soldiers, they go to kill, to shed someone else's blood. Death is, on occasion, the unfortunate result, which soldiers do all they can to avoid. In the recent war in Kosovo, for example, those in charge avoided a ground war because it would have led to American deaths. We wanted to shed their blood without shedding our own. It was because Jesus did not want anyone else to die that he went with the full intention of allowing his blood to be shed, and his alone. His was the one sacrifice which made all other sacrifices unnecessary. And the freedom we want is not to be gained through the shedding of any blood other than the blood of our Lord. Please, let's not use Jesus' sacrificial death as a justification for war.—*Dennis Ernest, Lititz, Pa.*

A helpful model

A majority in the Mennonite church says that homosexual sex is wrong. Even so, we are asked to show tolerance to congregations who welcome sexually active homosexuals as members. This is not without precedence. There is an issue parallel to homosexuality in which people make a particular lifestyle choice—one soundly condemned by Mennonite faith statements—and we don't discipline congregations who welcome as members people making that choice. I'm thinking of the issue of membership for military personnel. Even though Scripture soundly and consistently rejects the way of the sword for followers of Jesus, we tolerate congregations receiving members who are in the military because of these things:

- It is clear congregations and conferences in question teach against military involvement.
- The pastors of those congregations are nudging (maybe too gently for the observers) people away from military service.
- There is no doubt that the denomination is against military involvement.

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readers say

This issue of membership for active military personnel is a helpful model for those who want to work at getting the majority to tolerate congregations who welcome sexually active homosexuals as members. They should not expect that we show more tolerance for same-sex conduct than we do for military service. In other words, those calling for us in the majority to show toleration should also be calling for continued clear indications from the involved congregations and conferences that they affirm the church's faith statements. People should not expect us to tolerate congregations which allow sexually active homosexuals to be members unless the following are also happening:

- The congregations and conferences involved teach against homosexual sex.
- The pastors of the congregations involved are nudging (maybe too gently for some of us) people away from homosexual sex.

People who disagree that Scripture gives a consistent, strong message against homosexuality should push for the Constituency Leaders Council of the integrated Mennonite Church U.S. to address that issue. The deep issue is actually not polity and toleration of diversity but rather whether the church must be as firm against homosexual sex as we are against military service.—*Harold N. Miller, Corning, N.Y.*

Clarifying comment

I want to clarify the quotation attributed to me in the article "Changing Times, Mixed Emotions" in the July 6 issue. My comments were given with only the structure of the Mennonite Church as the focus. I affirm my commitment to the Mennonite Church as a significant expression of my Anabaptist faith. I do maintain a strong emotional tie to the church and the agencies in which I served.—*H. Ernest Bennett, Elkhart, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Wally Kroeker

Work as play

Sam Nance sees his business as a stage for expressing values and faith.

by Wally Kroeker

Sam Nance got his start on the stage, but his theatrical business is no act. For more than 20 years, he's made his living doing what he enjoys. Like music and sports, the theater is "one of the few jobs where work is defined as play," Sam says.

Business, however, is more than fun. Sam sees it as, well, a stage for expressing values and faith.

His Dallas-based company, Samarco Inc., specializes in theatrical stage lighting, staging scenery for business meetings, fashion shows, parties, even some church dramas.

If you've attended large Mennonite events such as Wichita 95 or Orlando 97, you may have seen him or his staff setting up screens, lugging cables and checking microphones. They're the gaffers who make sure the rest of us can actually see and hear what's going on.

Samarco also rents and sells theatrical equipment, ranging from make-up, lighting and theatrical hardware to computer programs and crowd-control devices (ropes and stanchions like you see in a bank lobby).

> [Sam] believes many people are looking for what the Mennonite church has to offer in terms of witness, sense of mission and a living faith. A lot of other churches are coming to a similar holistic understanding of Christianity, he insists.

"If it's needed in a theater, you can probably get it through us," says Sam.

His life in the theater began back in ninth grade, when he won the role of Sergeant Gregovich in *Teahouse of the August Moon*. He later majored in theater at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and went on to the Dallas Theater Center to work on a master's degree. Along the way he found he also enjoyed the technical side of design and lighting.

"One day it occurred to me that the technicians generally got to go home after the show was over and the actors didn't," he says. "And that was kind of appealing."

He took on more freelance design and technical work and by 1977 faced the prospect of putting acting aside and starting a business.

Launchpad to business: "A friend and I were working together on a freelance job," Sam says. "Our employer preferred to pay a company, rather than individuals, so we formed a company to cash the check. When we opened the checking account, the bank gave us a pad of checks. We looked at that pad of checks and said, 'Well, we might as well keep going.' "

For the next year they worked out of the trunks of their cars, then graduated to an unused warehouse and finally to a permanent location.

They settled in a rough neighborhood close to downtown Dallas. The rent was cheap, and a nearby freeway provided access in any direction.

It was also consistent with Sam's view that a business should care about community development. "If you're going to [work] in the city," he says, "you should be in the city."

The company has grown well beyond that first pad of bank checks. Today Samarco has seven full-time and a dozen part-time employees.

Sam maintains connections with the dramatic theater as resident lighting designer for a small theater in Dallas. Acting is pretty much a thing of the past, though he'll do the occasional part or dramatic reading at Dallas Mennonite Church, where he attends with his wife and two teenage children.

His service on the Western District Conference home mission committee kept him tuned in to urban concerns. Sam attends gatherings of the Christian Community Development Association, where he rubs shoulders with agencies that are trying to provide hope and economic opportunities for low-income areas.

He sees urban ministries as a key issue for the Mennonite church. "We need to get into the cities in a way we haven't before," he says.

He believes many people are looking for what the Mennonite church has to offer in terms of witness, sense of mission and a living faith. A lot of other churches are coming to a similar holistic understanding of Christianity, he insists.

We try to do reconciling kinds of things.—*Sam Nance*

A visitor to the Samarco shop might see little more than a lot of black boxes containing cables, lighting fixtures and dimming devices. For Sam, this is where he feels called to put his values to work in a practical way.

Does he consciously feel like he's in ministry? "Of course," says Sam. "Christians are called to practice shalom, even in business."

He views shalom as much more than peace, more than the absence of conflict. "It has to do with wholeness and right relationships—first of all a right relationship with God, a right relationship with yourself, with your neighbor, with your environment and how you live all that out. That's what the church is about. It kind of all comes together."

How does that play out in the world of lights and microphones?

At its most obvious, it means not doing certain things. Once Samarco was invited by a major Texas industrial firm to bid on a drapery job. Sam recognized the company as a manufacturer of nuclear weapons components. He wasn't keen to provide drapes for a boardroom where life-threatening decisions would be made, so he declined to bid.

Where Sam most consciously feels a sense of ministry is in relationships with employees. "We try to do reconciling kinds of things," he says.

Involved but not pushy: He tries to remain involved in employees' lives but without being pushy or nosy. Where there's a need, he wants to bring healing and some sense of wellness.

Take smoking, a prevalent addiction among theatrical people.

"I've made a deal with my employees," Sam says. "If they want to quit smoking, they come to me on whatever day they want the clock to start running, and I'll put a note in their file. If they can go a year without a cigarette, I give them a check for $500."

He sees smoking as not only a health and environmental issue but also a business issue "because you spend a lot of time lighting cigarettes. Beyond that, I'm helping [people]; I'm helping them get their health back together. I'm making it worth their while to do it."

He can be an easy touch for employees who want to borrow money, whether a few dollars or much more. He doesn't charge interest, and his terms are easy. He's been known to forgive loans entirely. He figures he's still ahead, because it has enabled him to keep good employees.

"Maybe I'm just an emotional softie," he says, "but I also did it out of a sense of trying to help them solve problems."

A self-described softie: Sam Nance

Wally Kroeker

Going the extra mile(s): Some employees test the limits, forcing Sam to go the second, third and fourth mile.

"There have been employees that I have taken back several times rather than just cutting them loose," Sam says. "Some have had serious problems, like not showing up for a week. I talk to them and try to find out what's going on and why this happened. I tell them, 'These are our expectations; here's what we had seen for you and your future; here's how we feel about it right now. Where are we going with this?' We try to negotiate it."

But even a self-described softie can be stretched too far. "Sometimes we have to say, 'Sorry, it's not going to work.' Other times we say, 'OK, we'll give you another chance. But you're on double secret probation.' Sometimes they make it through and turn into good employees; other times they don't make it through."

At its best, a business can be an ally of the church in developing people, says Sam.

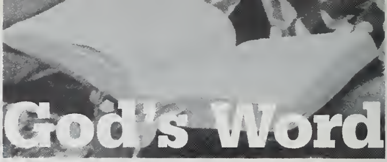
He recites a popular slogan used by U.S. Army recruiters: "Be all that you can be."

Too bad, he says, that the Army used it first. It's the church that is called to develop people into what God intended, to help people be all that they can be.

"And that," says Sam, "means developing leadership and helping people understand what it means to have shalom in their life."

Wally Kroeker is editor of The Marketplace, *where this article first appeared (March-April 1999 issue).*

Christians are called to practice shalom, even in business. It has to do with wholeness and right relationships—first of all a right relationship with God, a right relationship with yourself, with your neighbor, with your environment and how you live all that out.



Marilyn Nolt

A church that listens to God's Word

by Lydia Harder

Prophets call for transformation of the community and seek to relate the gospel to new situations. They disrupt the easy assurance of established authorities, creating new possibilities by pointing to the basic intention of the gospel.

The fact that Christians find different answers in the Bible has always been a troubling aspect of appeals to the Bible's authority.

Willard Swartley of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has illustrated this dilemma in his book *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women* (Herald Press, 1983) by demonstrating how Christians on different sides of these issues appeal to the Bible to support their convictions. In the case of slavery and the observance of the Sabbath, history has shown that a minority interpretation gradually became accepted as God's will.

In the case of war and women, the issue is not yet settled. In fact, Mennonites continue to be in the minority in their interpretation of biblical texts on war and peace.

The ethical issues surrounding our sexuality create some of the deepest divisions in our churches. How do our maleness and femaleness affect how we serve God in the world? What does naming ourselves as homosexual or heterosexual mean within the context of God's creation of humankind?

Weapons: This dilemma is not solved by rejecting biblical authority. Nor is it helpful to use biblical texts as weapons to defend our positions. We need to ask ourselves how we can increase our "hearing" ability as a community of faith so that we can truly hear God's voice in the midst of a conversation among many voices.

The Bible is realistic about our frequent inability to hear God's word. Already in Genesis, Adam and Eve reinterpret God's commandments to suit them and thus miss hearing God's intention for their lives (Genesis 3). The Bible ends with Revelation and its repeated appeal: "Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches" (Revelation 2 and 3).

In between there are frequent reminders to "hear the word." For example, read the parable of the sower in Mark 4. Or turn to Mark 8:14-21, where Jesus reprimands his disciples for their lack of understanding of his words. Naming ourselves disciples does not mean we will hear what God is saying to us.

The early church recognized that a core group of books should become the canon or measuring rod for the church. This canon we call the Bible contains books that are recognized by the universal church as "inspired" Scriptures, "useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). But what a strange lot of books make up our Scriptures! We might expect a system of beliefs or a set of rules or even models for the Christian life. Instead we have a realistic story of the success and failure, struggle and victory of a community called to be the people of God, a community that stretched over thousands of years, from the time of Abraham to the time of Paul. And this story is told in diverse ways, including narrative, law, poetry, proverbs, sermons and letters. In fact, the shape of the Bible mirrors the shape of the church and the variety of people who proclaim God's Word.

Kinds of writings give hints: The Bible received its canonical shape over several centuries as the people of God discerned which writings were most valuable for knowing God's will. The kind of literature included in our Scriptures gives us valuable hints about the kind of dialogue partners that should be included in the church's discernment process today.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament begin with literature considered foundational. The Law, or Torah, and the Gospels contain the stories that we are to tell our children or the stranger in our midst when they ask, "What does this mean?" (Exodus 13:14) or "Why should we believe?" (John 20:31).

These are the stories from the tradition of the people of God, passed on by parents, pastors and teachers. These contain the confessions of faith of the past, the consensus that is used to build a church that is sure of its own counter-cultural identity. These stories disclose the faithful, dependable God who calls us to be a community of disciples committed to holiness and righteousness.

The laws about what is clean and unclean, often quoted in connection with sexuality issues, are in this part of the Bible. So are the stories about Jesus, who pointed out both the misinterpretation of these laws in Israel and their deeper significance.

Today we are often not sure which words represent our foundational beliefs. For example, when we read John 8, some of us emphasize, "Let those without sin be the first to throw a stone at her," while others stress, "Go your way, and do not sin again."

Foundational convictions are usually not questioned by people who hold them. This means that even foundational texts may be misused and misapplied in new situations. We note how the legitimate interpreters of the law in Jesus' day, the scribes, became rigid and

Clarification: In the article "A Diverse Congregation" (July 6, page 18), Ed Springer is quoted as saying that "60 percent of us are non-Mennonite." His meaning was not from a Mennonite background. Also, Ed has been an ordained Mennonite minister since 1968.

Why do Christians reading the same Bible come to different conclusions as to its meaning for today? Part of the answer lies in the variety of writings within the Bible itself. Part 3 in a series

exclusive in their understanding of the Torah. A prophet was needed who could speak a new word from the Lord for a new situation.

Prophetic literature: A large part of the Bible is made up of prophetic literature. Prophets call for transformation of the community and seek to relate the gospel to new situations. They disrupt the easy assurance of established authorities, creating new possibilities by pointing to the basic intention of the gospel.

The prophets in the Old Testament were usually not the credentialed people in the community. They often came from the outside or margins of the community. They were the troublers who, with their passionate visions and dramatic poems, demanded change. They proclaimed a free, sovereign God who intrudes into history, bringing a new word.

Jesus was a prophet in the midst of a people who thought they were faithfully reading the Torah. He became a troubler who was rejected by many in the community. Other New Testament writings were troubling to the early Christians. Peter found it difficult to listen to the new word from God that Paul proclaimed, suggesting that foods and people that were once considered unclean were now to be considered clean (Galatians 2:11-12).

The early church was not at all sure that the book of Revelation, with its disturbing images, should become part of the canon. It is not easy for those of us who are sure of our Christian identity to listen to the prophets in our midst.

Wisdom literature: Not all self-proclaimed prophets are true prophets of the Lord. It is probably not accidental that another kind of literature made its way into the Bible to help discern God's will. This is the diverse group of books we call "wisdom literature." Wisdom comes through experience in the world and from a variety of sources, including sources outside the community of faith.

Wisdom literature recognizes the interconnectedness of all life and bases its knowledge on the Creator God, who sustains the whole world. For example, Proverbs has many connections with the literature of neighboring peoples. Job is a primary example of "faith seeking understanding" (to use Augustine's phrase) when experiences do not fit the traditional image of God in the community. Paul uses the wisdom of the Romans and Greeks to further the gospel.

The wise in our midst are the reflective people who understand that secular knowledge can become sacred if it is brought under the lordship of God. They are the teachers who challenge us to live responsibly and freely to the limits of the knowable, confident in the God who has created the whole universe. The wise recognize the impact of new knowledge on our understanding of God.

For example, the wise in our day try to understand good and evil in a time when our roles and our whole view of sexuality are changing, with new biological, psychological and sociological knowledge. They recognize the distance between the biblical time and our time and seek to use every tool available to understand these changes.

Biblical prayers: Knowledge from outside the community of faith, however, is always in danger of bringing in false values and thus distorting the gospel. A community committed to listening to God's word needs a fourth kind of knowledge. The Psalms are perhaps the best reminder in the Bible of the reorienting and transforming knowledge gained through worship and prayer.

In the New Testament, doxologies and prayers are sprinkled throughout, witnessing to the community's intimate and direct relationship with their heavenly Abba and Friend.

Recognizing the kinds of prayers that made their way into public worship in Israel and therefore into the Scriptures will help us seek God's truth when dissonance enters our faith communities. The expressions of anger, anguish and revenge that we hear in Psalms 137 or 139 are not easily allowed in most of our churches. Only if we are confident that God listens to these voices and will heal all of us can we listen to these experiences of fear, disorientation and despair.

As we try to be faithful amid the confusing issues of our day, worship of the one God will save us from idolizing our limited knowledge, whether we identify with traditional convictions, prophetic hopes or wise counsel. Hope for our dialogue will come when our conversations, even our disagreements, are surrounded by praise and prayer to the only one who knows the truth completely.

It is in the safety of God's presence that worn-out convictions can be shattered, a new word from God be heard and the wisdom of God prevail. In acknowledging our need to have our ears opened, we will be transformed by the same Spirit that inspired the Scriptures. It is this transforming knowledge that encourages us to wait and listen as we read the Bible in the midst of all God's people.

It is in the safety of God's presence that worn-out convictions can be shattered, a new word from God be heard and the wisdom of God prevail.

Lydia Harder is director of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, where she also teaches theology. This third in a series on the Bible originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

Peace lessons are only the beginning

EMU students take learnings back to embattled homes

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Now that school is out, the real work can begin.

The Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, drew some 146 participants from 44 countries to the five sessions offered between May 10 and July 2. Participants represented six major religions and 15 Protestant denominations; almost half were women.

The participants have since taken their lessons and their learnings back to strife-torn communities around the world.

Nigel Grimshaw, a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, returned to Northern Ireland, where he is struggling to implement restorative justice in the suburbs of Belfast.

"Restorative justice identifies the fact that when a crime is committed, it causes harm to people and to the relationship between the victim, the offender and the community," he says. "The goal is to repair that relationship.

"A lot of what I've learned here has put flesh on the bones of the principles and given me the opportunity to look at how to address difficulties and work toward the goals of restorative justice."

Of the 15 courses offered, the two most popular this year were "Ethnic Identity and Conflict Transformation" and "Philosophy and Methods of Conflict Research." But Grimshaw says he also learned a great deal by interacting with other SPI participants.

"Our divisions are deep in Northern Ireland, but the experience of meeting so many people who struggle with these issues in other settings gives me hope that we can solve our difficulties," Grimshaw says.

School spokesperson Gloria Rhodes says SPI attendance was down slightly this year, the program's sixth, because a number of applicants had trouble getting either U.S. visas or funding to make the trip.

"When people come willing to share and are open, it becomes a true community of people who are dedicated to seeking peaceful solutions to conflict," Rhodes says.

Jim Bishop

Cosmas Lam from Uganda (left) and Nigel Grimshaw from Northern Ireland, two of 146 participants in Eastern Mennonite University's 1999 Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

First-time participant Cosmas Lam came to SPI from Uganda, where an insurgency has plagued the country for more than a decade. Tensions are strained between Uganda and neighboring Sudan, which is also suffering from protracted rebel activity.

"Peace is one of the biggest things needed in our region right now, and I learned that peace is a long-time process," Lam says. "People, because of the pain they have gone through, want peace now, but that's not the way it happens. It takes as long to come out of a conflict as to get into it. Peace is a vision, but the work must start now."

SPI is sponsored by EMU's graduate-level Conflict Transformation Program, which this summer received a boost from the Washington-based Winston Foundation for World Peace. The foundation, which plans to cease operations later this year, awarded a $400,000 endowment for the creation of a fellowship program to cover all costs for two or more participants to attend SPI each year.

"The choice of Eastern Mennonite University to be the steward of this fellowship program was significantly a result of your excellent record for fostering innovative, activist approaches to peace," Winston Foundation executive director John Tirman said in announcing the award.

According to program guidelines, fellowship recipients, after completing their SPI coursework, will spend at least two months working with a nongovernmental or intergovernmental organization in their country or region.

The foundation and EMU originally worked together to create the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, which promotes peace efforts in West Africa. The director is EMU graduate Samuel G. Doe, a Liberia native.—*Julie Gochenour*

Bethel program expands peace work

With a new educational program and its first summer peacemaking training, the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution is increasing its efforts. KIPCOR is a program of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Twenty-eight people attended the Summer Mediation and Facilitation Training Service Institute on the Bethel campus July 12-16. It was jointly sponsored by KIPCOR and Mennonite Conciliation Services. Participants spent the week learning various mediation skills.

Starting this fall, Bethel, through KIPCOR, will offer a conflict management certificate program. The required 12 credit hours of courses will originate in the social science, business and social work departments and will also include a three-hour internship.—Bethel Bulletin *and Esther Bohn Groves*

Mennonite doctors, nurses groups hear call for increased advocacy at annual convention

MOUNT PLEASANT, Pa.—As the health-care problem in the United States worsens, Mennonite health-care providers need to take ownership of church statements calling for access to basic care for everyone, an advocate-turned-pastor urged a convention of physicians and nurses.

Despite the current economic boom, the number of uninsured Americans has been increasing by more than 1 million a year, Karl Shelly told the annual convention of the Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Nurses Association, held June 24-27 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center near Mount Pleasant.

The problem is "getting larger and more invisible" as politicians are reluctant to address it, said Shelly, who served for five years as a health-care advocate in the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office before joining the pastoral staff of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., earlier this year.

Statements adopted by the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1992 and by the Mennonite Church in 1993 call for a health-care system that provides access to basic health care for everyone in the United States, regardless of ability to pay.

Convention plenary speaker Carol Farran, a nurse and author from Oak Park, Ill., said she had to accept that the health-care system is now radically different from what it was when she began nursing. She pointed out that lamenting—giving voice to one's pain—is a part of healing.

But another plenary speaker saw reasons for hope. Fran Wenger, who is on the staff of the Interfaith Health Program of the Carter Center in Atlanta, described the faith and health movement as an interfaith effort to align assets at the community level so that the most mature faith and the most relevant health science are available to all.

During the convention, both the Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Nurses Association took steps toward greater involvement in advocacy work. The nurses voted unanimously to give their executive committee authority to advocate politically for health-related issues on behalf of the organization. Efforts are currently focused on the Fairness for Legal Immigrants bill, which attempts to restore federal benefits, including Medicaid, for some legal immigrants who lost them to 1996's welfare legislation.

Members of the Mennonite Medical Association also identified the need to get involved in advocacy work, and committees are now being formed.

In other convention activities, Paul Roth of Killbuck, Ohio, received the 1999 Doctor of the Year Award from the Mennonite Medical Association. Erma Isaac of La Junta, Colo., received the Nurse of the Year Award from Mennonite Nurses Association.

Among the convention workshops, Elton Lehman of Mount Eaton, Ohio, described the accommodations he makes to serve an Amish population whose convictions against insurance and vehicles limits their access to health care. Other workshop topics included the Internet and dance.—*Jennifer Halteman Schrock*

GC church-planting goal reached early

A General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) church-planting initiative has met its goal two years early.

GC delegates in 1992 approved a "Resolution to Laugh With Abraham and Sarah" to establish 50 new congregations in the United States and Canada by 2001. That goal has been reached this summer with 51 congregations that have or will join GC area conferences and/or the General Conference Mennonite Church. Another 25 congregations are emerging.

The Abraham and Sarah initiative is a joint effort of the Commission on Home Ministries and the home mission committees of the area conferences.—*GCMC News Service*

MCC photo by Mark Beach

Teaching aids

Three children from a shelter in Makeevka, Ukraine, hold contents of school kits sent by Mennonite Central Committee. As of July, MCC had sent 54,223 kits to nine countries. But supplies are depleted, and MCC hopes to send another 31,325 kits to six countries yet this year. The projected total of 85,548 would be triple the average number of kits MCC has sent annually over the past seven years.

Small Belgian presence has large witness

Mennonite center known for mediation, conflict resolution

BRUSSELS, Belgium—The unassuming building just a few blocks from the center of the European Union headquarters doesn't attract much notice. But for nearly 20 years, the Centre Mennonite de Bruxelles (CMB), or Brussels Mennonite Center, has been a hub of Mennonite activity.

Since its opening in 1980, CMB has served a variety of roles in this small, central European country that is 90 percent Roman Catholic. It has provided a Mennonite witness to peace, served as a center for Anabaptist theological thought in Belgium, created a peace library for children and introduced mediation and conflict resolution into the French-speaking Protestant churches in Belgium, France and Africa.

Mediation and conflict-resolution training is the primary focus of CMB's work today, led by staff members Juan José Romero and Maite Gayo. Both are natives of Spain but have lived in Belgium for much of their lives. Romero leads the CMB mediation training program.

Along with colleagues Françoise Cognaut and Pascal Keller, Romero teaches primarily in the Brussels area but sometimes ventures farther into the Belgian countryside. They instruct schoolteachers in conflict management, children in peer mediation and church leaders and members in conflict resolution. They are working at expanding further into mediation training in the government. Romero has also made several Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored trips to French-speaking African countries for mediation workshops and training.

"I think [mediation training] is important for the human reality," Romero says. "From our birth, there is no one place where we can learn these skills. There is nowhere to think systematically about conflict management, mediation, 'Who am I as a listener?' and 'Who am I as a speaker?' "

Keller, who served as a Mennonite pastor in France for a number of years, says working in mediation training is a means of acting out his faith in Jesus.

"Mediation is a way to learn to obey Christ," he says. "I think the Christian witness today is a good way to show that the gospel can help us live together. The churches should show to the world another way of relating to one another."

In the 16th century, many of the new Anabaptists were in Belgium. But as persecution began and believers were executed, their numbers plummeted. Today, there are only about 100 Mennonites in Belgium.

CMB president Annie Hubinont and her late husband, Willy, helped to start the center to fill a void when Mennonite Board of Missions worker David Shank left Belgium in the early 1970s.

"After David Shank left Belgium, we had the feeling that there was no place that was uniquely Mennonite," Hubinont says. "We felt there needed to be a place where people could come to learn about Mennonites. I think people are beginning to appreciate the contribution of Mennonites here. We are not trying to build new churches, but we work to support existing churches."

CMB has gained respect across the theological spectrum. Benedictine nun Marie Philippe says CMB may be small, but it can have a large impact on Belgians. "The Mennonite witness to peace is important," she says. "It's like a small seed for peace. Perhaps its very smallness can be a better witness to the good news of the gospel. They are a ray of light."

Isabelle de Tavernier, pastor of a Protestant church in Brussels, says her encounter with Mennonites changed her. "What really struck me wasn't only what they were saying but also the way they were living," she says. "It was really powerful to me that they lived so closely to what they were preaching."

Plans are under way to enlist a theologian to bring together the practical training and the theological thought behind it.—*Christy Risser for MBM News Service*

Correction: The recommendation to place Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, on "sanctioned" membership in Iowa-Nebraska Conference came from the Conference Council and not the floor of the delegate assembly as reported in the July 13 issue.

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Belizean Mennonite still held by kidnappers

BELMOPAN, Belize—The family of a Belizean Mennonite is seeking prayer support more than four months after his abduction. Menno Penner, 42, a farmer and businessman, was kidnapped March 17 by a guerrilla group called the American Battalion for the Poor (BAP).

Penner's wife, Tina, has requested prayer for his release, for wisdom for the authorities working on the case and that the guerrillas accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

A letter from the BAP said Penner was abducted because he was a Mennonite, landowner, businessman and professional colonizer. The letter also stated Mennonites were BAP targets. The guerrillas want $1 million in ransom, which has not been paid. The abduction is the latest in a series of robberies and break-ins against Mennonites and others. One Mennonite man was killed in 1997.

The Penners assisted refugees from El Salvador in the 1980s and in 1992 helped start an outreach church in Belmopan, Belize's capital. The family includes four children.—*MWC News Service*

Field hockey coach wins national honor

LANCASTER, Pa.—Lauri Hoober, field hockey coach at Lancaster Mennonite High School, has been named national field hockey coach of the year by the National Federation Interscholastic Coaches Association.

This past season, Hoober's team won the sectional championship and finished sixth in the district tournament. The 1997 team was the first in school history to advance to a state championship game.

Hoober is a 1988 Lancaster Mennonite High School graduate and was an All-American field hockey player at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Hesston president to take sabbatical

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston (Kan.) College president Loren Swartzendruber will take a four-month sabbatical, beginning on Sept. 1, to work on his doctoral dissertation. His dissertation focuses on parental involvement in college choice decisions. Swartzendruber is getting a degree from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Chicago.

Goshen closes books on successful year for gifts

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen (Ind.) College posted its third highest year ever for gift income, receiving more than $13 million for the fiscal year ending June 30. Of that total, a record $9.1 million was for special funds, including $6 million in Lilly Endowment grants. Goshen had $5.6 million in gift income in 1997-98.

by the way …

According to an informal survey, the average length of a Mennonite worship service is 78 minutes, with 26 minutes devoted to the sermon.
—*Christian Living*

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Envisioning a New Mennonite Church
A study guide for Mennonite congregations and organizations

Envisioning a New Mennonite Church is a free six-session study series from integration planners for use by classes and groups in Mennonite congregations September-October 1999. *Envisioning a New Mennonite Church* will help congregations develop a new vision for mission. Congregational responses will also help shape the programs and structures of the new Mennonite Church.

- *Plan now for classes and groups in your congregation to use the study.*
- *Watch for your free copies of the entire study in the mail in early August.*
- *When you receive your free copies, register your congregational groups and classes as indicated.*
- *Order additional copies for a nominal fee or photocopy as needed.*

Births

Beachy, Sophia Grace, June 28, to Lester and Lori (Maust) Beachy, Kokomo, Ind.

Denlinger, Isaiah Stanley, June 25, to Duval and Tamara (Hunsberger) Denlinger, Perkasie, Pa.

Goosen, Natalie Joy, May 18, to Jaqueline (Lofland) and Lowayne Goosen, Freeman, S.D.

Hood, Kathleen Renee, June 27, to Eva (Kelley) and Jerry Hood, St. Joseph, Ill.

King, Brady Lee, June 4, to Lance and Stephanie (Haima) King, Albany, Ore.

Masters, Benjamin Robert, June 24, to Glenda (Nussbaum) and Robert Masters, Mt. Eaton, Ohio.

Mast, Morgan Clair, July 7, to Galen and Tami (Ripke) Mast, LaGrange, Ind.

Reichenbach, Benjamin David, June 17, to Eric and Jenny (Lehman) Reichenbach, Baraboo, Wis.

Roesler, Joshua James, June 1, to James and Sheri (Blocher) Roesler, Hillsboro, Ore.

Roth, Ethan Ray, June 20, to Shannon and Stephanie (Lambright) Roth, Elkhart, Ind.

Roth, Simon Donald, June 25, to Beth and Lane Roth, Archbold, Ohio.

Schildt, Matthew Kaleb, June 18, to Mark and Sue (Stanley) Schildt, Philadelphia.

Short, Brianne Nicole and Trevor Michael (twins), June 2S, to Angie (Zolman) and Michael Short, Archbold, Ohio.

Stahl, Ann Marie, July 1, to Karen (Nachtigall) and Mark Stahl, Nappanee, Ind.

Swartzendruber, Carley Starr, June 14, to Christopher and Jacqueline (Stanek) Swartzendruber, Shickley, Neb.

Waters, Jamie Marie, May 21, to Dave and Melinda (Haynes) Waters, Johnstown, Pa.

Marriages

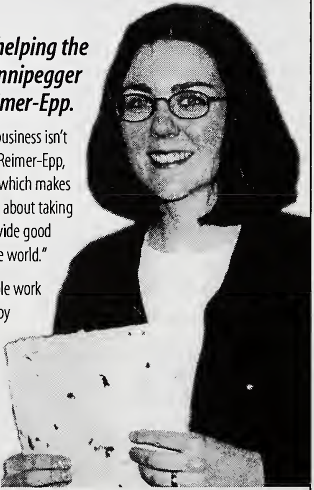
Canaday/Rector: Stephanie Canaday, Nottingham, Pa., and Tim Rector, Oxford, Pa., June 2S at Mt. Vernon Mennonite Church, Kirkwood, Pa.

Cross/Throne: Arley Cross, Bryan, Ohio, and Kathy Throne, Bryan, June 5 at Pinegrove Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Dangel/Waltner: Jeremy Dangel, Rapid City, S.D., and Heather Waltner, Freeman, S.D., June S at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Fake/Houtz: Robert Fake, Annville, Pa., and Jenifer Houtz, Ephrata,Pa., June 12 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Frey/Short: Dale Frey, Pettisville, Ohio, and Mary Short, Pettisville, June 26 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.



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Geiser/Hendrix: Frank Geiser, Smithville, Ohio, and Carrie Hendrix, Wooster, Ohio, July 3 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Gooding/Peterson: Elaine Gooding, Archbold, Ohio, and Damen Peterson, June 26 at Archbold.
Groff/Horst: Roselle Groff, Strasburg, Pa., and Clifford Horst, New Holland, Pa., June 26 at Strasburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Haney/King: Kyla Haney, Salem, Ore., and Brandon King, Albany, Ore., June 19 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.
Hoober/Lefever: Lauri Hoober, Paradise, Pa., and Rodney Lefever, Lancaster, Pa., June 27 at Cara Cove, Md.
Hoover/Leininger: Eric Hoover, Myerstown, Pa., and Vickie Leininger, Myerstown, May 29.
Karagiorge/Rolon: Sonia Karagiorge, Wauseon, Ohio, and Jose Rolon, Columbus, Ohio, June 19 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.
Kauffman/Smith: Ryan Bucher Kauffman, Bellefontaine, Ohio, and Valerie Smith, Hagerstown, Md., May 8 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.
Lang/Scheler: Kyle Lang, Sacramento, Calif., and Angie Scheler, Albany, Ore., July 3 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.
Lee/Wilkerson: Shane Lee, Wayland, Iowa, and Bobbi Wilkerson, Yarmouth, Iowa, June 19 at Wayland (Iowa) Mennonite Church.
Meiskey/Stone: Fern Meiskey, Ephrata, Pa., and Raymond Stone, Lancaster, Pa., June 26 at Ephrata (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Miller/Swartzendruber: William Miller, Kalona, Iowa, and Emily Swartzendruber, Shickley, Neb., May 22 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.
Noel/Whiting: Reg Noel, Shickley, Neb., and Monica Whiting, Scottsbluff, Neb., June 26 at Monument Bible Church, Scottsbluff.

Deaths

Baynard, Charles Sr., 64, Philadelphia, died June 16. Spouse: Barbara Allen Baynard. Parents: Walter and Florence Baynard (deceased). Other survivors: children Charles Jr., Timothy, Walter, Benjamin, Paul, Barbara Peachee; seven grandchildren. Funeral: June 21 at Diamond Street Mennonite Church, Philadelphia.
Boehr, Frieda Kalvoda, 80, Hastings, Neb., died June 29 of a stroke. Spouse: Elmer Boehr (deceased). Parents: Dirk and Henreka Enninga (deceased). Survivors: children Norman Kalvoda, Ronnie Kalvoda, Garry Kalvoda, Carol Brittain; stepchildren: Carol Ott, Elmiran Boehr, Ronald Boehr; six grandchildren; five stepgrandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 1 at Hastings.

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Corwin, Iola Yoder, 95, Nappanee, Ind., died June 29. Spouse: Loyal Corwin. Parents: Amos and Amanda Stahly Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Anita Pingalore, Walter, Allan; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 2 at Nappanee.
Friesen, Lois Bixel, 73, Milwaukie, Ore., died June 19 following heart surgery. Spouse: Elmer Friesen. Parents: Verdi and Leona Bixel (deceased). Other survivors: children Carolyn Neufeld, Elaine Strang, Ruth Holsinger, Mark; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church.
Hofer, Clifford, 87, Huntsville, Ala., died June 16. Spouse: Anna Gross Hofer (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Owen, Inez McCreery, Daisy; seven grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.
Lehman, Norman, 88, Chambersburg, Pa., died June 29. Spouse: Lydia Wadel Lehman. Parents: Peter and Alice Frey Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: son Dale; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 3 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.
Lyndaker, Elwood, 73, Castorland, N.Y., died July 5 of lung cancer. Spouse: Edith Chubb Lyndaker. Parents: Reuben and Adah Lehman Lyndaker (deceased). Other survivors: children Elwood, Kevin, Mitchell, Denise Widrick, Kristel Fuller; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: July 8 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.
Martens, Margaretha Janzen, 89, Steinbach, Man., died June 30. Funeral: July 5 at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church.
Miller, Katherine, 91, Albany, Ore., died June 27. Parents: Albert and Mary Troyer Miller (deceased). Funeral: July 1 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.
Miller, Mabel Gerig, 85, Albany, Ore., died June 9. Spouse: Benjamin Miller. Parents: Martin and Emma Nofziger Gerig (deceased). Other survivors: children Daniel, Harold, Leroy, Wayne, Judy Gascho, Janet Oyer; 20 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.
Nolt, Milton Wenger, 88, Lititz, Pa., died July 1. Spouse: (1st) Margie Gehman (deceased). (2nd) Martha Landis. Parents: Mahlon and Ella Wenger Nolt (deceased). Other survivors: children Irene Ebersole, Ira, Evelyn Horning, Elvin, Naomi Wyble, Wilmer, Ella Mae Murray, Betty Sauder, John, Dorcas Benner, Eugene, Barbara Herr, Brenda High; 33 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at Metzler Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.
Roth, Ruth Mast, 89, Honey Brook, Pa., died June 21. Spouse: Reuben Roth (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Fannie Yoder Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Lowell, Calvin, Dwight, Joy Martin, Mary Frances Leader, Ramona Lichty, Bonnie Zimmerman; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Leola, Pa.
Swartzentruber, Fannie Lilly Yoder, 88, Schuyler, Va., died June 15. Spouse: Ernest Swartzentruber (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Nancy Stutzman Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Homer, Alice Raiford, Rhoda, Thelma Chow, James, Dale; 19 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 19 at Rehoboth Mennonite Church, Schuyler, Va.
Witmer, Dean, 69, Columbiana, Ohio, died June 27 of complications from surgery. Spouse: Carolyn Hively Witmer. Parents: Paul and LaRue Longanecker Witmer (deceased). Other survivors: children Paula Dunlap, Larry, Wayne; nine grandchildren. Funeral: July 1 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

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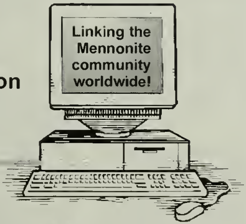
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classifieds

- **East Goshen Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a pastoral team member with emphasis on ***youth and young adults***. Contact Search Team, East Goshen Mennonite Church, 17861 SR 4, Goshen, IN 46528; email egmenno@npcc.net; web site eastgoshen.in.us.mennonite.net

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***science/biology/ word-processing teacher*** (75 percent).

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Zion Mennonite Church**, Archbold, Ohio, is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor*** with the primary focus on pastoral care and small groups, also assisting with preaching and worship planning.

  Send resume or inquiry to Barnaby Wyse, 432 Clover Lane, Archbold, OH 43502; 419-445-0083; email Barnabyrw@juno.com

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city elementary school, is in search of a ***3rd/4th-grade*** classroom teacher. Applicants with teacher training and experience will be given preference. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 16, 1999. For more information or to request application materials, contact Marvin Friesen, principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Association of Anabaptist Risk Management** (AARM), serving Anabaptist nonprofits, seeks a ***president CEO*** from a Lancaster, Pa., base. Strong background in insurance and/or financial management required, along with strong leadership and communication skills.

  Send resumes and direct inquiries to Henry Rosenberger, Box 313, Blooming Glen, PA 18911; fax 215-453-2905.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a ***one-year voluntary service assignment*** beginning in mid-August 1999. Responsibilities include the usual tasks for operating a bed and breakfast facility with the added dimension of relating to international guests in a Christian homelike setting. Cross-cultural experience desirable.

  Contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Employment opportunity**—***associate conference minister*** to serve with Western District Conference with offices in North Newton, Kan. Duties include oversight for congregations and pastors and resource for evangelism and church planting. Three-fourths time position to begin early fall 1999, to be located in Texas, preferably the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Preference given to people fluent in Spanish and English, with M.Div. degree and pastoral experience. Salary according to denominational guidelines.

  Contact Marvin Zehr, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; 316-283-6300; fax 316-283-0620; email marvz@mennowdc.org

- **Goldenrod**, a unique interdependent community being developed in the Amish countryside near Middlebury, Ind., seeks ***live-in caregiver-companions*** to provide nurturing environment in a faith community for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities. Compensation includes room, board and stipend. Opportunity to be employed at least part-time outside the home. The community will include retirees as foster grandparents, organic gardening, holistic health clinic and facilities for exercise and recreation.

  Contact Mennonite Disabilities Committee, 1518 College Ave., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-9720; email Menno.Dis@juno.com

- **Tri-County Mennonite Homes** is seeking a full-time ***coordinator of gift planning services***. This corporate office position will focus on developing gift planning to assist the program divisions, serving seniors and developmentally challenged adults, in fulfilling their mission and objectives. The successful candidate will possess knowledge/ability in charitable gift planning, fund-raising, public speaking, preparing newsletters and computer literacy.

  Please forward a resume by Aug. 31, 1999, to Tri-County Mennonite Homes, 200 Boullee St., New Hamburg, ON N0B 2G0; fax 519-662-2284. (Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.)

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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Review of applications:
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For additional information contact:

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EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

by Rich Preheim

Living water in a barren land

Given the fact that it is in a city in a geographic and Christian desert, it is not difficult to call the Evangelical Church of Kuwait an oasis. A very big oasis.

Once a congregation of 50, each week it now attracts more than 15,000, representing 42 nationalities, reports *Christianity Today.* All but about 40 of the churchgoers are from countries other than Kuwait, which is Muslim.

Forty-five congregations share the facility of the Evangelical Church of Kuwait, in the city of Mahboula. There are 2,000 English-language congregants, two-thirds of them from India and the Philippines. Ten English-language services are held each week, most on Friday, Islam's holy day.

Most of the expatriates in the Evangelical Church of Kuwait have come to Kuwait from much poorer countries in hopes of making enough money to send home to family members. Most of the Kuwaiti Christians in the church were born into the faith, although a few were Muslims who converted.

Land grab

The C in YWCA stands for "Christian." But some San Francisco-area folks are accusing the YWCA of being decidedly un-Christian as it tries to unload a building that may not even belong to the organization, says *Colorlines.*

California's Anti-Alien Initiative of 1921 banned Japanese immigrants from owning or leasing land. So women from churches in San Francisco's Japantown section who raised money for a YWCA site asked the organization to hold the property on their behalf until they could legally take title. While the 1921 law was declared unconstitutional in 1952, the YWCA has held onto the property and has tried to sell the building for the past three years. The organization has also threatened to close its programs held in the building for preschoolers and adolescent girls.

A group of Japantown churches have filed suit against the YWCA to return the site to its rightful owners. The YWCA has responded with technical reasons why the churches don't have a claim.

Y2K watch: Like sands through an hourglass

Saints Herald asks: Who says God is flipping pages on the same 12-month calendar we use, the one birthed by Pope Gregorius XIII in the 16th century? After all, Jan. 1 of 2001 will be the Jewish year 5761, the Chinese year 4698, the Islamic year 1422 and the Zoroastrian year 2391.

Score one for conscience

A United Nations council has granted "special consultative status" to Conscience and Peace Tax International, reports a news release from U.S. member organization National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. CPTI is a coalition of peace tax organizations and supporters in 16 countries.

CPTI will now be able to designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the U.N.'s Economic and Social Council and also make written and oral reports to the council. The council has previously granted special consultative status to organizations such as Amnesty International, the American Bar Association, Pax Christi International and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

CPTI members advocate for legal ways for conscientious objectors to direct their taxes away from military purposes.

Online religious sites are a hit

Oh, that evil Internet. Promulgating the most vile material in computer monitors across the world. Providing shocking depravity with the click of a mouse.

That's all there. But there is much more. *CNN Interactive* says online religion is actually besting the skin trade. Using the AltaVista search engine, a search of the word "God" turned up nearly 6.4 million Web sites, compared with 4.8 million for the word "porn." Lucifer is also taking a popular beating on the Web. A search of "angels" produced 1.3 million sites, while "Satan" had less than 300,000 sites.

Lightening the load

Judge Walker Miller deviated from sentencing guidelines to give two Quakers shorter prison terms for their protest at a Minuteman missile silo in Colorado last year. Sachio Ko-yin received 30 months in prison and Daniel Sicken 41 months for sabotage, conspiracy and destruction of government property. "They didn't put a bomb in a bomber," Miller said in *Friends Journal.* Federal guidelines recommend terms of 63 to 97 months.

Tidbits

- Every year, 5 percent of career missionaries leave the mission field; of that number 71 percent leave for preventable reasons. —*Mission Frontiers Bulletin*
- The Algonquin tribe in Quebec recently dedicated the first New Testament in its language.—*Indian Life*
- Nearly 15 percent of the World Council of Churches' 150-member Central Committee are below the age of 30.—*Ecumenical Courier*
- Christians make up less than 1 percent of Tokyo's population.—*CityVoices*
- Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) delegates have passed a resolution that church members should voluntarily remove handguns and assault weapons from their homes.—*Window*

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Rich Preheim

Evangelicalism: the vertical and the horizontal

Even though it occurred during a discussion about religion, the question still came out of the blue:

"Are you an evangelical?"

How to answer? How to define an evangelical? Aren't all Christians supposed to be evangelical? Aren't we all called to witness to the Risen Lord in word and deed?

Yes, but ...

As North American evangelicalism has evolved over the last half of the 20th century, the word "evangelical" has been appropriated by political and cultural interests. The implication, then, is that believers who support public schools or are uncomfortable with Promise Keepers are not concerned with advancing the kingdom because they are not "evangelical Christians." The contemporary use of the phrase has become a label so laden with baggage that its very use tears us apart.

Contemporary evangelicalism, while a legitimate expression of Christian faith, is only a subset of biblical evangelicalism. And biblical evangelicals are Christians. With the Bible as their authority and the Holy Spirit as their guide, they receive Christ and spread his good news of salvation and transformation. In fact, "evangelical" is derived from the Greek word for "gospel" or "good news." Christians are people of Christ's good news and are therefore evangelicals.

Because Mennonites are Christians, Mennonites are also biblical evangelicals. The Great Commission—"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19a, NIV)—is of primary importance to our beliefs. But while the contemporary evangelical movement has seemingly stressed the "go" part of Christ's last command, Mennonites have stressed "make disciples." Discipleship is, after all, a primary tenet of Mennonitism. Proclaiming salvation is an integral part of that—but it is only the start. Once salvation is accepted, a believer is called to emulate Christ's life. That means overtly and deliberately sharing the good news with others. But it also means acting justly, loving mercy and beating swords into plowshares, as the Bible teaches.

Because of the different emphases on the vertical—a person's relationship with God—and the horizontal—Christians' relationships with others as a result of their relationship with God—the two are, unfortunately, often seen as incompatible. Regrettably, that has prompted many Mennonites to eliminate their Anabaptist identity in favor of contemporary evangelicalism. (Even now, the Evangelical Mennonite Conference is considering dropping "Mennonite" from its name.)

As an example of that perceived tension, Mennonites historically have been ambivalent about revivals, which have been a key contemporary evangelical method of proclaiming Christ's salvation. At the same time, however, the desire to do mission work was a primary impetus for various groups to come together and form both the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

Another example of tension is contemporary evangelicals' apparent unchecked national pride and subsequent military support. The official magazine of the Wesleyan Church recently included a full-page guide to displaying the U.S. flag and a "Tribute to a Soldier," which derided pacifists: "If only they could see what the world would be like if no one had fought for their freedom, they would change their tune and bend their knee."

But such positions, no matter how popular, are not planks in the platform of biblical evangelicalism. Nowhere in our mandate to share the good news are we called to preach idolatry and death.

Evangelicalism cannot be limited to cultural or political interests. That limits the gospel. Menno Simons wrote that "true evangelical faith" is both the vertical and the horizontal: fearing God as well as feeding the hungry, returning good for evil as well as seeking the lost, teaching as well as saving.

Because of its ambiguity and divisiveness, eliminating the word "evangelical" from our religious vocabulary would be ideal. But that is no doubt unrealistic. So we need to be vigilant in its use. No one group of believers' strengths or weaknesses gives them license solely to claim and define evangelicalism. After all, Christians are those who believe in and share Christ's good news. They truly are evangelicals.—*rp*

Evangelicalism cannot be limited to cultural or political interests. That limits the gospel.

No issue next week: The next regularly scheduled issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Aug. 10 and will include our coverage of St. Louis 99.

theMennonite

August 10, 1999

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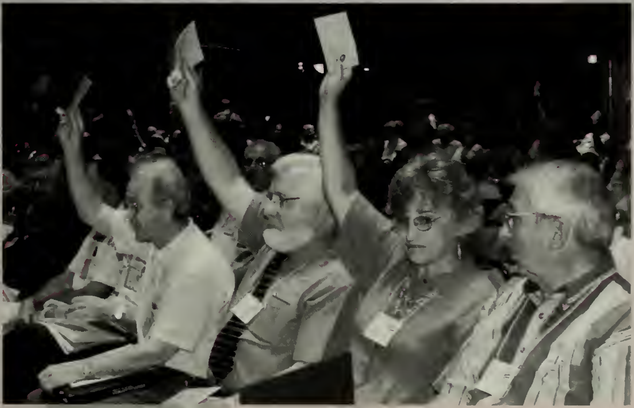
merging streams murky waters

A special report on worship, fellowship and business at St. Louis 99



COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

We came to the river

Some 9,700 of us who are Mennonites gathered on the banks of the Mississippi, close to the Gateway Arch, July 23-27, for St. Louis 99. We came from across the United States and Canada—with representatives from many countries where Mennonites have established churches.

This was likely the most complex North American Mennonite event ever staged. Some 2,580 adults participated in a convention that included Bible studies, worship, seminars, meeting old friends and making new ones. At the same time 6,300 youth and their sponsors—the largest Mennonite youth gathering ever—shared the facilities of St. Louis' America's Center for their activities, including worship, seminars and a large recreation complex called River City in the adjoining Trans World Dome. We worshiped together once; we ate together every day.

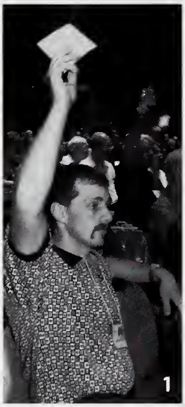
There was also a convention for 400 junior high youth 20 miles away on a college campus. A similar number were at America's Center for a children's convention. And there were separate activities for young adults.

In addition, we did business. Delegates from three groups—Conference of Mennonites in Canada, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church—sometimes met separately but simultaneously, sometimes together and at least half the time in U.S. and Canadian caucuses as they worked toward developing Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA—two subgroups of a new integrated Mennonite Church.

In these pages we attempt to capture some of the activities and drama of these five days, including both joys and sorrows. Here is a record of what God's Spirit was attempting through Mennonites as we gathered and sang often:

"Yes, we'll gather at the river,
The beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river
That flows by the throne of God."

—*J. Lorne Peachey*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This report of the events and activities of St. Louis 99 is a cooperative venture of *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*. In addition to staff members from these publications—Ferne Burkhardt, Aiden Schlichting Enns and Ron Rempel from *Canadian Mennonite* and Gordon Houser, Rich Preheim and J. Lorne Peachey from *The Mennonite*—the following writers also helped with our coverage: Cathleen Hockman-Wert, Huntingdon, Pa.; Brian Hook, St. Louis; Susan Allison Jones, Waterloo, Ont.; Larry Kehler, Winnipeg; Jessica King, Pittsburgh; Erika Ratzlaff, Moundridge, Kan.; Tammy Duvanel Unruh, North Newton, Kan. All photos in this issue are by Dale D. Gehman, Mount Joy, Pa., except where noted.

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Photo 1—Michael Oesch, Caldwell, Idaho, casts a vote; 2—Paul Dueck, leader of the youth worship band; 3—adult worship leaders Cynthia Neufeld Smith and Rick Maclin; 4—delegates join hands to pray for new church leaders; 5—many St. Louis 99 participants took one visit to the Gateway Arch; 6—youth in prayer during worship; 7—praising God during the children's convention.

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COME TO THE RIVER

St. Louis 99

New church: USA and Canada, eh

St. Louis delegates OK plan for two-country structure

General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) delegates have approved the resolutions necessary to give birth to a new Canadian structure and start the gestation period for a parallel U.S. structure, all under the banner of the new Mennonite Church.

The actions, taken at St. Louis 99, the joint GC-MC-CMC convention held July 23-27, included forming Mennonite Church Canada out of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada and Canadian GC and MC members. A de facto U.S. body was also created, called Mennonite Church USA, although the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church will continue to exist, minus the Canadians, until incorporation is complete. That will probably be in 2001 when the next U.S. delegate assembly will be held.

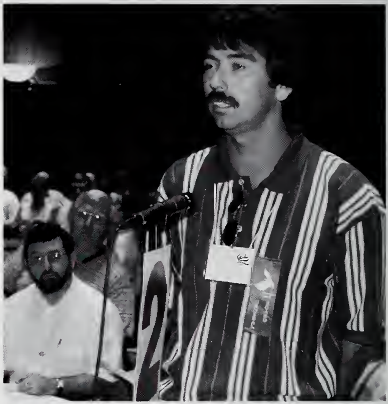
In a ballot vote in joint sessions, the creation of the two-country structure received 95 percent approval from CMC delegates, 88 percent from GC delegates and 83 percent from MC delegates. All joint resolutions needed two-thirds votes to pass. Delegations also approved by a show of hands a resolution to develop partnerships between the U.S. and Canadian bodies.

"I see this as a step where we as Canadians and Americans can each become stronger as a conference," said Gerd Bartel, GC and CMC delegate from Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C. "Then as mature conferences we can work together."

"I do feel sadness in this new model," said Dagne Assefa, MC delegate from Indiana-Michigan Conference, "but globally I think this is the right direction to go. Why should the U.S. have a special relationship with Canada? Is it because of the ethnic connections? Or is it theological?"

Said Victor Klassen, a native Canadian now living in Rochester, N.Y., "We can't assume we're the same."

But some U.S. delegates criticized the two-country structure as playing into nationalistic attitudes. "One of the problems here in the United States [is] a very poor understanding of what went on in Canada," said J. Denny Weaver, GC delegate from First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio. "That means a two-country structure with partnerships allows us to go different ways and lets the United States off the hook. ... We really should look at it as an interim solution while we look at what it means to be a church transcending national boundaries."



Speaking out: Don Barnhill, Mennonite Church delegate from United Native Ministries, speaks against the composition of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. Even though the racial/ethnic groups currently have seats on the board, he said, they are not permanent and may be eliminated after a scheduled review of the new structures in 2005.

Joe Kotva, GC delegate from First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., said the two-country structure "reinforces the idolatrous tendency in us that church interests and national interests coincide."

Willis Busenitz, GC delegate from White River Cheyenne Mennonite Church, Busby, Mont., reminded the assembly of the U.S.-Canada border's cultural dynamics. "Native people do not recognize the 49th parallel," he said. "They know it's there, but they consider themselves one."

With the dissolution of the binational GC and MC structures, delegates repeatedly underscored the need to work at partnerships, such as seminary education, mission work, assemblies and issue discernment.

"We have to be very intentional that we don't lose touch with each other across the 49th parallel," said Mike Smith, GC representative from Fairfield (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Said Bartel, "I think that's a commitment we need to make to each other as we continue this maturing process."

With the new church structures come new names. After extensive discussion and several proposed amendments to the original resolution, U.S. delegates scrapped Mennonite Church U.S. in favor of Mennonite Church USA—no periods between the letters.

David Wiebe, GC delegate from First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., said the country

USA *continued on page 6*

> Globally I think this is the right direction to go. Why should the U.S. have a special relationship with Canada?
>
> *—Dagne Assefa*

Number crunching

Attendance at St. Louis 99 fell short of expectations, but the 9,698 registrants were still about 1,300 more than for Wichita 95, the previous joint convention.

The breakdown: 2,584 for the adult convention, 6,306 for the youth convention (4,722 youth, 1,318 sponsors and 265 staff), 398 for the junior high convention and 410 for the children's convention.

All in a row: Bob Hartzler, General Conference Mennonite Church delegate from Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D., leads a parade to the microphone during one of several delegate sessions devoted to discussion of membership in the new Mennonite Church USA.

U.S. delegates delay membership decision

Anxieties remain as two resolutions from the floor fail

While U.S. delegates at St. Louis 99 were able to find enough common ground to pass a measure delaying action on membership guidelines, two related floor resolutions were defeated, further exposing the levels of disagreement in the church over membership, authority and homosexuality.

"The polarization seems clear," said Leann Toews, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) delegate from Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan. "I don't see how it gets better."

Said Herman Diener, Mennonite Church (MC) delegate from South Central Conference, "I don't see much unifying here the past couple of days."

The approved membership resolution, which came from the GC and MC general boards, calls for Mennonite Church USA to study the proposed guidelines for membership in the new body. Further action probably won't come until the 2001 Mennonite Church USA delegate assembly. The resolution to delay was handily accepted by the U.S. delegates: 87 percent of the General Conference Mennonite Church and 75 percent of the Mennonite Church.

By contrast, 96 percent of Canadian delegates voted to immediately implement the membership guidelines for Mennonite Church Canada.

The guidelines propose that all current GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada congregations automatically become members of the new church and that membership and discipline decisions rest with area conferences. That means all congregations that have lost their MC memberships because of their positions on homosexuality would become members of the new Mennonite Church by virtue of their GC memberships. That has resulted in charges that the guidelines are soft on homosexuality.

"To us, this looks like we're condoning this whole practice," said Lindsey Robinson, MC delegate from Lancaster Conference. "That's very troubling to us."

Several delegates raised the possibility of denominational defections. "If the national [body] does not have enough confidence in the Scriptures, … there are congregations that don't want to be part of the national body," said Bob Gerhart, GC delegate from Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Said Joe Wood, MC delegate from South Central Conference, "I find it difficult to be part of a covenant of trust where there is a redefinition of sin."

In response, Harold Miller, MC delegate from New York Conference, brought a resolution reaffirming church statements that sexual activity is reserved for a woman and a man in a marriage relationship. The resolution failed as 53 percent of GC delegates voted against it. Seventy-two percent of MC delegates supported it. A two-thirds vote was needed from each group for passage.

James Smith, MC delegate from Illinois Conference, said Miller's resolution "embraces with integrity the position our denomination has for biblical truth."

But others opposed the measure because they questioned its use and consequences or because they don't agree that sexual activity between homosexuals is necessarily sin.

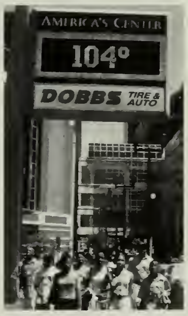
"It seems to me a resolution like this is railroading," said Wanda Roth Amstutz, MC delegate from Allegheny Conference.

Said Heidi Regier Kreider, MC delegate from Southeast Conference, "I think it draws a wedge in something that is very polarized."

The resolution's failure prompted sharp outbursts in response. "We can spin that anyway we want, … but that was a very clear statement," said Henry Buckwalter, MC delegate from Lancaster Conference, who claimed the defeat made for the saddest day in his church life.

Walt Smith, GC delegate from Raleigh (N.C.) Mennonite Church said, "I'm angry, but I'm much more sorrowful. I see this institution devouring itself, and I frankly don't see it changing much."

Membership *continued on page 6*



Feel the heat

Despite what the display said outside America's Center, site of St. Louis 99, the National Weather Service said it never got that hot in the city during the convention, although it certainly felt like it. According to the NWS, the high temperatures and heat indices for those days were:

- July 23: 98 and 106
- July 24: 96 and 108
- July 25: 99 and 107
- July 26: 102 and 109
- July 27: 91 and 101.

COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

USA

continued from page 4

is known around the world not as the U.S. but as the U.S.A. "That single letter can make it better for international understanding," said Wiebe, who has served in Chad and India.

Integration Committee member Ruth Suter said U.S.A. had not been brought to the delegates because it sounded too nationalistic. "We didn't want to be associated with the Olympics or the military, which include the A," she said.

That point was supported by Rene Mejia, an MC delegate from Ohio Conference and native of El Salvador, where, he said, "We suffered 20 years of war unfairly under U.S.A."

But Doug Kauffman, MC delegate from Atlantic Coast Conference, said, "The way to fight this dragon of nationalism is to name this reality. … Dropping the A is a way of denying that reality."

In response to the U.S. delegates' action, Ron Sawatsky, the last CMC moderator and first Mennonite Church Canada moderator, jokingly suggested that to create a parallel name, perhaps the Canadian body should be known as Mennonite Church Canada Eh.

In other action, the U.S. delegates approved the recommendations of the U.S. Country Committee and Transformation Team, outlining the plans to create the Mennonite Church USA organization, including leadership structures, delegate assemblies, financing, legal issues, program boards and the rationales and principles behind them.

The Transformation Team will direct the organizational creation of Mennonite Church USA. The nine-person team is led by former GC general secretary James Schrag, who is the only full-time member. Former MC general secretary George Stoltzfus has been named Mennonite Church USA general secretary.

The delegates also approved the slate of nominees for the U.S. Executive Board, which replaces the GC and MC general boards (see box).—*Rich Preheim*

New U.S. executive board

Executive Committee: moderator Lee Snyder, moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, secretary Duane Oswald, James M. Harder, Roy Williams. **Other members:** Don Barnhill, Cleon Claassen, R. Lee Delp, Leslie Francsico III, Susan Gingerich, Patricia Hershberger, Harold N. Miller, Shoua Moua, Ruth Naylor, Jane Hoober Peifer, Lois Thieszen Preheim, Edwin Rempel, Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, Norma Wiens, Diane Zaerr.

STOP
Time is up

Convention Program Committee co-chair Janeen Bertsche Johnson from Elkhart, Ind., signals that a delegate's allotted time for speaking has expired.

Membership

continued from page 5

For others, the meaning behind the vote on Miller's resolution was less clear.

"I think the reality is, 'I don't know,' " said Tim Schrag, GC delegate from Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.). "I'm reinforced by the number of friends who agree that homosexual activity is sin but voted against the resolution."

Earlier, a substitute motion from Pacific Southwest Conference to immediately accept the membership guidelines rather than waiting failed on votes of 79 percent from GC delegates and 45 percent from MC delegates.

Opponents to the Pacific Southwest resolution wanted more time for dialogue. "Give us two years to give us a level of comfort we are currently not experiencing," said MC delegate Howard Hershberger from South Central.

But others doubted that the additional time would produce any change. "We need to go ahead with the merger," said Phil Baumgarten, GC delegate from Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia. "I don't think two years will make a difference."

In the meantime, proponents said, integration is continuing at a variety of levels, making the guidelines increasingly necessary.

"Accepting these guidelines now provides a basis for adopting membership guidelines for [area] conferences who will be integrating in the next biennium," said David Boshart, whose conference, Iowa-Nebraska, is in the process of merging with Northern District Conference.

The failed resolutions left delegates trying to offer explanations. Listening Committee member Ervin Stutzman, MC delegate from Lancaster Conference, said, "We have voted our deepest fears": fears that the church is deviating from Scripture and fears that the church will become heavy-handed and authoritarian.

Matt Friesen, GC delegate from Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., said the actions underscore the necessity for congregations and area conferences "to reach across lines we know are there and speak with those who differ with us in very substantial ways."

The approved membership resolution does not offer specifics for studying the guidelines. But one place where such study may be lodged is the Constituent Leaders Council, a convocation of leaders from area conferences and other constituent groups that will, among other responsibilities, provide a forum for dialogue and discernment.

"We will do our best to work at that issue," said Stutzman, who, as Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect, will chair the council.
—*Rich Preheim*

GC, MC, CMC chapters close at St. Louis

Longtime churchman Robert Kreider no doubt spoke for just about everyone at St. Louis 99.

The convention featured what probably were the last separate delegate sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC). Delegate action at the convention created Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, effectively closing the book on the long and distinguished histories of the three integrating bodies.

GC, MC and CMC delegates met separately for part of the convention's first day. Kreider, speaking at the GC session, called the transformation "a time of death and a time of birth, a time of sadness, a time of joy."

Citing joint projects such as missions, service, hymnal, publications "and hundreds, hundreds of committee meetings," Kreider said the time to join together has arrived. "We have become brothers and sisters as we have broken bread together," he said.

The GC session also included recognition of General Board members and the reception of four new congregations: Hmong Mennonite Church in Arvada, Colo.; Iglesia Menonita Luz del Evangelio in Dallas; Iglesia Menonita Encuentro de Reconvacion in Miami; and New Hope Mennonite Church in Omaha, which is the only one of the new congregations that holds its services in English.

In the MC session, the Peace and Justice Committee honored Delton and Marian Franz for their long careers in peace work. Delton was the first director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office, serving from 1968 to 1994. Marian has been the executive director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund since 1982.

Peace pitcher: While his wife, Marian, looks on, Delton Franz displays the pitcher they received from the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee in recognition of their peace work. Delton was the first director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office, and Marian is the executive director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

"They have become models for the church of sharing the peace and keeping the faith," said MC general secretary George Stoltzfus.

MC delegates also agreed to add one Canadian representative to the MC program boards for the next two years. The original slate of nominees included only one Canadian due to the impending creation of Mennonite Church Canada and its own programs. But the MC program boards will for now remain binational entities. The unexpected time spent on the issue erased more of the time scheduled for reflection in anticipation of integration.

CMC delegates commemorated the conclusion of their conference with a historical presentation.—*Rich Preheim and J. Lorne Peachey*

Delegate dance

Overheard on the way to delegate sessions in the America's Center convention complex: "It's interesting that they have the [General Conference Mennonite Church delegates] meeting in the ballroom and the [Mennonite Church delegates] in the lecture hall."

Delegates strongly back CMC transformation plans

With the firm support of delegates at St. Louis 99, the Conference of Mennonites in Canada has laid the foundation for becoming Mennonite Church Canada. CMC and Canadian Mennonite Church delegates authorized the transformation by a 99 percent vote.

The delegates approved five resolutions, which covered leadership, funding, vision and mission statements, delegate representation, general board composition, program boards and legalities.

While their U.S. brothers and sisters struggled with the proposed membership guidelines for the new church, the Canadian delegates adopted them by a 95 percent vote.

"They do not speak to how we dismember but how we member," CMC general secretary Helmut Harder told the delegates. "We commissioned the area conferences to be the ones to deal directly with [discipline of congregations]."

But placing discipline with the area conferences was a point of concern for Al Rempel of Whitewater Mennonite Church, Boissevain, Man. "The document does not specify how to deal with area conferences if they don't share the [Canadian body's] core values," he said.

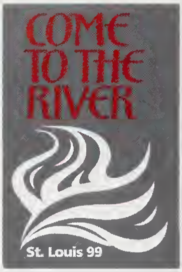
Critiques were also offered in other areas. Ingrid Schultz, First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, applauded the gender and racial ratios being used by the U.S. church in filling leadership board positions. "I don't see anything similar in our proposals," she said.

"We'll keep that in mind as we move along," said Jake F. Pauls, CMC assistant moderator.

The CMC session was attended by some 400 delegates, far exceeding expectations of 250 to 300 people.—*Aiden Schlichting Enns*

Meeting needs

Why use parliamentary procedure at the St. Louis 99 delegate sessions? To be fair and not waste time, said parliamentarian Al Albrecht. "And I assume Mennonites still know how to be unfair to each other," said Albrecht, from Goshen, Ind. "And they still know how to waste time."



Two-country structure gets mixed reviews

When St. Louis 99 youth convention participants were asked which conference they belong to, it was difficult to categorize some of the responses:

General Conference Mennonite Church—whatever. I think Mennonite Church. OM (Old Mennonite). St. Louis.

Gwendolyn N. Peachey said the older conventiongoers can learn something from the teenagers: Integration can be considered a success "when we adults are just like the youth and have no idea what conference we're part of," said Peachey, from Ephrata, Pa. "We're just one church."

But others are not so sure integration is producing just one church. The old General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada structures are being replaced by two country bodies. "When we first agreed to integration, the idea was that we were all going to be together," said Jonathan Brown of Elkhart, Ind. "At midstream, they changed it."

While binational conventions are anticipated to be held every four years, it doesn't feel the same, said Harold D. Bartel of North Newton, Kan. "It may seem more like an obligation now to get together," he said.

Said Julie Bender of Hamilton, Ont., "This is not the integration I had envisioned."

But her husband, Phil, said, "With a stronger identity, the Canadian churches may feel more like peers with their U.S. counterparts."

That was echoed by Carol Rose of Wichita, Kan. "In conversations I've had with individual Canadians, I've come to understand that we in the United States have been prejudicial," she said. "You hear stories of people in meetings acting as if Canadians were not present—and it's true. We need to confess it. We haven't gotten better fast enough."

First prayers: Lee Snyder, moderator of the new Mennonite Church USA (center), receives a prayer of blessing from her pastor, Dorothy Nickel Friesen of First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio (left), during the closing worship of St. Louis 99. During the service, Mennonite Church Canada moderator Ron Sawatsky (right) also received a prayer of blessing from his pastor, Sue Clemmer Steiner of Waterloo (Ont.) North Mennonite Church (back).

Van Hoa Chau of Winnipeg said the two-country system will simplify structures and make them easier to understand, particularly as the church becomes increasingly multicultural. Still, he said, "I wonder how the Vietnamese Mennonite churches in Canada and the U.S. will now relate to each other."

Henry Warkentin of Coaldale, Alta., who immigrated to Canada from Paraguay, approved of the two-country structure, saying he sees the church as more than just the United States and Canada. "We should be establishing relationships with Mennonite churches in many other areas of the world," he said.

Lever Wang of Campbell, Calif., agreed that some sort of restructuring was necessary but lamented the way it was done. "We should divide some other way than national boundaries," he said. "This is the Anabaptist church. Originally they wanted to separate church from state."—*Cathleen Hockman-Wert and Larry Kehler*

To the Finnish

Tomas Nordstrom had come to the United States from Finland to attend a meeting of Christian artists. While traveling across the country, he heard about the Mennonites meeting in St. Louis and stopped by the America's Center, the convention site, for a visit.

Breakfast in Canada: an introductory seminar

Canada is like a box of cereal, Allan Rudy-Froese told participants at a St. Louis 99 seminar on "Life and Faith in Canada: A View from the North." He used Froot Loops to introduce U.S. church members to the country context of their Canadian Mennonite brothers and sisters.

First, Canada has 10 times as many doughnut shops per capita as the United States. "Canadians eat a lot of doughnuts, and [the Froot Loops] look like doughnut seeds," said Rudy-Froese, pastor of Rockyway Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont.

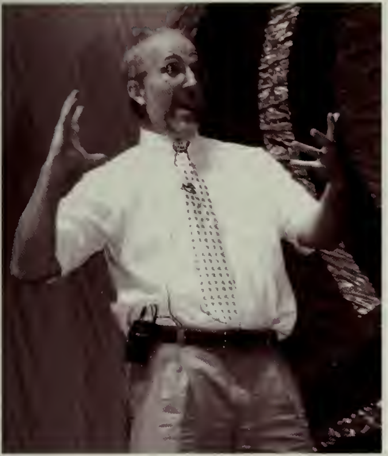
Second, he noted, the writing on the cereal box is in English and French. "Everything we read in Canada is in both languages," Rudy-Froese said.

The seminar participants talked at length about the significance of bilingualism.

Third, Rudy-Froese said, Froot Loops' different colors represent Canada's multiculturalism. "Entrenched in our constitution is the ideal of multiculturalism," he said. "In fact, Canada funds cultural groups to maintain their own identity."—*Aiden Schlichting Enns*

Follow the Lamb to the New Jerusalem

Kraybill opens the book of Revelation for today's listeners



The three Bible studies at St. Louis 99 focused on the often-inscrutable book of Revelation. J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., looked at the historical and literary background of the final book in the Bible and offered modern lessons from it.

The first session looked at Revelation 4:1–5:5, which asks, "Who is worthy to open the scroll?" The book of Revelation is an example of theodicy, Kraybill said, which answers the question, If there is a just God, why is there suffering and evil? While Revelation was addressed to seven first-century churches in Asia Minor, he said, it also speaks to us today. This book "calls us to trust in the sovereignty of God and to worship the One who alone deserves our allegiance," he said.

In his response to this lesson, Jose Ortiz noted that "apocalypse" means to remove the curtains. "We are about to remove the curtains as a church," he said, "to see the future of the Mennonite church."

The second session looked at 13:1-10 and 14:1-5 and asked, "Who can fight the beast?" Studied in its context, Kraybill said, the book of Revelation uses symbols and images that clearly refer to Caesar and encourages Christians to remain faithful to Jesus Christ. He unveiled some of the apocalyptic terms that refer to first-century political figures and not, as some current writers claim, to future realities. For example, Kraybill said, "I'm convinced that '666' is a reference to Nero Caesar."

He added that the burden of Revelation is not that Christians everywhere were being persecuted but that they were accommodating to society's values. "Revelation is a call to faithfulness and endurance," he said.

In his response, Leonard Dow said, "We can see where we want to be, but we have a long way to go." And like the Christians addressed in Revelation, "many Mennonites have become soft, comfortable in our society," he added.

The final session considered part of the final chapter of the Bible, Revelation 22:1-7, and asked, "How will the nations be healed?" Again, Kraybill stressed, much of what is mentioned in this book was already happening. For instance, the four horsemen and the plagues John writes about represent things going on in John's time.

Apocalyptic books from John's time are often constructed like an art gallery with many rooms rather than sequentially, Kraybill said. And in the final scene, John shows a painting of invitation. "The doors of the New Jerusalem are always open," Kraybill said. So too must be the doors of our churches.

In her response, Gwen Groff pointed out that John was writing to people on the margins, while most of us live in Babylon. "It's dangerous for us in the dominant society," she said, "to have a persecution complex." She also noted that people move into the New Jerusalem, not out, and they come from "all the nations."—*Gordon Houser*

> The book of Revelation calls us to trust in the sovereignty of God and to worship the One who alone deserves our allegiance.
>
> —*J. Nelson Kraybill*

Showing Scripture

Many of the passages of Scripture read at worship and Bible study sessions at St. Louis 99 were also illustrated through drama and objects. For example, the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan, recorded in Joshua 3 and 4, is illustrated by a drama group from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in the photo at right. Other illustrations included a liturgical dance choreographed by Carole Sawatzky, Winnipeg, to go with the story of Lydia in Acts 16:11-15; Mennonite comedians Ted and Lee as two Israelites facing the Red Sea, then being happily shocked when it parts; the peace evangelists acting out the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5:1-15a; and the Bluffton (Ohio) College drama group acting out the story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5-29, 39). People also heard Scripture read in Spanish, Lao and Cheyenne.—*gh*

Worship draws from river of symbols

Mennonites use ritual to explore convention theme

COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

Ritual and symbol flowed from the worship times at St. Louis 99. Following the convention's theme, "Come to the River," worship became a sensual experience as participants heard Scripture read and watched it dramatized, sang a rich variety of songs, smelled the healing aroma of sage, felt water on their hands and faces, and tasted pita bread and grape juice in the closing Communion service.

Beneath a huge banner by artist Jenny Miller of Topeka, Kan., depicting the St. Louis 99 logo in varying shades of blue, worship leaders Cynthia Neufeld Smith of Topeka and Rick Maclin of St. Louis invited people to add their own cloth to a river of prayer that spanned the front of the auditorium. People wrote prayers from congregations and individuals onto blue cloths and tied them to a wire-mesh structure shaped like waves. As the convention proceeded, people added cloths to the front.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio, and John C. Murray, Hesston, Kan., talked about "Praying at the River." Friesen reflected on Lydia (Acts 16:11-15) as a woman of prayer, while Murray reflected on early Anabaptists who went to the river to be baptized and to be killed.

A third worship leader, Lawrence Hart, Clinton, Okla., opened the July 23 worship by walking up an aisle from the back, wearing a blanket from his Cheyenne tribe. Later he led a ritual of remembering as a procession of people brought water from rivers that were part of their ancestors' experience and poured the water into a large clay pot made by Priscilla Wero of Farmington, N.M. Each person told a story about the river or creek from which the water came. Hart's water came from the river where in 1868 U.S. troops had killed some of his Cheyenne ancestors. Other water came from rivers in Switzerland, Ukraine, Quebec, Kansas, Manitoba, Montana, New Mexico, Honduras, Louisiana, Virginia and St. Louis.

A place of healing: The 10 peace evangelists of the new Mennonite Church led worship on July 24. The peace evangelists program has been jointly sponsored by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Peace and Justice Committee of the Mennonite Church. They used music, a litany, drama, personal reflections and prayer to show the river as a place of healing. In a ritual borrowing from Native practice, worshipers rubbed pieces of sage in their palms and offered prayers for healing around the world.

Adults and youth met together for worship morning and evening July 25. In the morning, Leslie Francisco III, Hampton, Va., preached on "The Potency of the River," from Psalm 1:1-3. He said he was speaking primarily to the youth on two themes: the power of choices and the results of right choices.

I'm ready to go to the river to meet my God, my neighbors. —*Dorothy Nickel Friesen*

When I do a word association with 'Mennonites,' the word 'prayer' doesn't come to mind.—*John C. Murray*

The quality of your choices will determine the quality of your life.—*Leslie Francisco III*

Rich variety of songs: Marilyn Houser Hamm, Altona, Man., leads singing at the adult worship. Behind her is part of the backdrop by Jenny Miller. Beside her is the commissioned pottery created by Priscilla Wero.

Peace evangelists: Four of the 10 peace evangelists dramatize the story of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-15a) at Saturday evening's worship. From left are Jonathan Larson, Atlanta; Ray Hamm, Altona, Man.; Bek Linsenmeyer, Inman, Kan.; and Michael Banks, Bronx, N.Y.

Prayers for healing: Heidi Regier Kreider, Gainesville, Fla., passes sage to her son Benjamin.

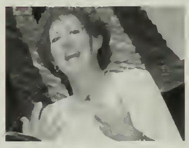
> From the headwaters of your mercy and goodness, fill the cisterns intended to slake creation's thirst, fill us with a yearning to mirror your lavish giving, brim the heart of your people with tears of compassion and the laughter of joyful service.
>
> —*from a litany by Jonathan Larson*

In the evening service, Irma Fast Dueck, Winnipeg, wove together stories and offered three words about healing: trust, listen and risk. The service ended with an invitation for anyone to come forward to receive anointing.

Cleansing and renewal: The July 26 worship brought symbol and reality together as speaker Diane Zaerr, Elkhart, Ind., invited people to "get wet." Using the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, Zaerr called people to follow the woman's example and "come to the water." As the choir from Bethesda Mennonite Church in St. Louis sang "Wash Me," participants received water in their palms, drank from it, then touched their heads and arms in a ritual of cleansing and renewal.

The closing worship on July 27 focused on "Crossing the River." Jacob F. Pauls, Winnipeg, called the river of the water of life a river of promise, of challenge and of the future. Worshipers participated in Communion, using pita bread from the Middle East. The moderators of the new Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, Lee Snyder, Bluffton, Ohio, and Ron Sawatsky, Waterloo, Ont., respectively, were commissioned by their respective pastors, Dorothy Nickel Friesen and Sue Steiner. Then St. Louis 99 came to a close with a final ritual as everyone stood and sang in four parts Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."—*Gordon Houser*

Trust that God wants us whole ... take the risk to get well.—*Irma Fast Dueck*



There is cleansing and renewal from the lips of those on the margins.
—*Diane Zaerr*

Have we domesticated the call of Jesus so that the river of life is only a trickle?
—*Jacob F. Pauls*

Ritual and symbols: Janeen Bertsche Johnson (left), Elkhart, Ind., serves Lawrence Hart, Clinton, Okla., in a cleansing and renewal ceremony at Monday evening's worship.

COME TO THE RIVER

St. Louis 99

Youth pray, play, worship, work together

Over 6,300 youth and sponsors gather at convention

At the opening worship service, Carlos Romero, youth convention coordinator for St. Louis 99, invited the 6,306 youth and sponsors present to "come to the river to meet God, to experience God and to open your hearts to what God is wanting to tell you this week."

Worship sessions held each morning and evening became the highlight for many. Worship leaders Amanda Friesen, Anna Gomez and Mark Vincent helped worshipers focus on experiencing God in new and exciting ways. The worship band led by Paul Dueck kept things lively as youth raised their voices and hands to praise God through song. Composer Ken Medema received numerous standing ovations as he summarized each worship service in song. Music, drama and dynamic speakers challenged youth around the convention theme "Come to the River."

To follow Jesus: After the evening service on July 25, more than 3,000 youth and adults were anointed for healing in their lives. Throughout the convention, youth made commitments and recommitments to follow Jesus. In the final worship service on Tuesday evening, Romero pleaded with youth to come to the river and to take the river home with them. Other speakers for the youth convention included James A. Forbes, Kathy Giesbrecht, Leslie Francisco III, Irma Fast Dueck, Michele Hershberger, Tony Campolo and Bernice A. King.

When asked how God's Spirit moved during the convention, organizers all cited the power of the worship services and of prayer. Youth wrote on a prayer wall, submitted prayer requests and met in groups around the America's Center to pray for each other. Small groups provided opportunities for youth groups to talk, cry and pray together.

River City, located in the Trans World Dome, became a gathering place for youth to meet old and new friends in a relaxed environment. It provided activities such as basketball, rock climbing, drama and music presentations, plus a chance to sit and converse with friends. Seminars, "Life 101 courses" and an anti-racism forum allowed youth and sponsors to dig deeper into issues that affect their lives today. Service opportunities throughout St. Louis let youth put some sweat behind their words.

PEACE
TAKES
GUTS!

Kathy Giesbrecht speaks to the youth.

Focus on God: Worship leaders for the youth convention were (from left) Mark Vincent, Anna Gomez and Amanda Friesen.

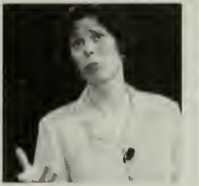
When is the next one?

For more information on youth conventions in the year 2001 contact your area conference youth minister, staff at Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries in Elkhart, Ind., or the Commission on Education in Newton, Kan., after Sept. 1.

We are amazed at the concern of the youth. Their prayer requests are sincere and deep.

—Jeannette Phillips, prayer team member from Souderton, Pa.

Carlos Romero


Michele Hershberger

Tony Campolo

Bernice King

Youth convention participants stayed in 12 St. Louis hotels. Community life coordinator Steve Ropp worked with a team of directors and facilitators to ensure safety in the hotel properties and assist sponsors where necessary.

"God is leading": A prayer team of eight walked around the convention halls, worship centers, hotels and River City to pray for the event, participants and speakers. Eric Musser, a team member from Franconia, Pa., said, "God is leading and teaching what he wants us to pray for and how to pray." Jeannette Phillips from Souderton, Pa., added, "We are amazed at the concern of the youth. Their prayer requests are sincere and deep."

As youth once again boarded their buses, planes, cars and vans to travel back home, many asked, "When's the next one?" Steven Francisco, incoming conventions coordinator, told participants that two binational youth conventions, a small gathering in Canada and a large gathering in the United States, will be held in 2001. Both conventions will be open to youth from either country. *—Erika Ratzlaff and Susan Allison-Jones*

Scenes from a convention: Some of the speakers (above left), at the anointing service (below), entrance to River City (bottom)

Welcome To River City

Praise to God: Dorothy Harding, Atlanta, sang at Sunday morning's joint youth and adult worship.

COME TO THE RIVER

St. Louis 99

What was most memorable?

Erika Ratzlaff asked a number of youth convention participants what was most memorable from their five days at St. Louis 99. A few follow.

Buster Soaries [the speaker on July 23] is probably one of the best I've heard.—*Kris Lechlitner, youth sponsor, Olive Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.*

I really enjoyed Ken Medema's songs after worship, because it's just cool how he can put … the message into a song while he's singing it.—*Jill Schmidt, Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.*

How lenient and nice our sponsors have been this whole week.—*Ryan Field, Pleasantview Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.*

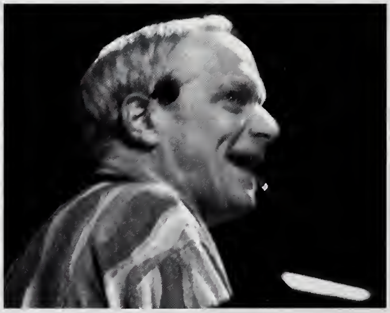
I really like all the singing we've done. —*Rachel Seyler, Steinman Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont.*

The speaker Michele [Hershberger] when she told the story about leaving the groceries on the front steps. It really hit hard, because it was actually God working through another person, … and it's not always what you expect.—*Vance Martin, Witmer Heights (Pa.) Mennonite Church*

On Saturday I did a prayer vigil at the Arch, and we were praying for people in Mexico who were having problems with peace. *David Denman, First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis*

I was one of the people in the crowd watching one of the singers at the band stand, and he started singing a song about his brother who was killed in a car accident. My mom was also killed four years ago and that song just really moved me. —*Kandi Fielder, Beatrice (Neb.) Mennonite Church*

We painted a house for people who can't afford their own house, so I felt good about that. Then we blessed the house, and it was fun.—*Scott Wilhelmsen, Pacific Covenant Church, Canby, Ore.*



More scenes from a convention: Clockwise from above right: rock climbing at River City, lively worship, a skit illustrating the story of Zacchaeus from Luke 19, passing the beach ball during singing and composer Ken Medema were a few of the many activities at the youth convention.

Pulled between two conventions, two identities

Young adults want greater representation in the larger church

St. Louis marked the first young adult Mennonite convention, part of the larger adult convention. Some 400 people registered as young adults—defined by convention planners as people between the ages of 18 and 30.

The large number of young adult registrants did not mean large turnouts for young adult activity, however. Some 250 of the 400 young adults were registered as youth sponsors and therefore attended the youth convention and select young adult activities. According to conference planner Jill Landis, Harrisonburg, Va., this scenario represents well the tension held by young adults in the church. During the convention, young adults were often referred to as a bridge between youth and adults—because of their ages as well as their spectrum of ideology and theology. Many participants said they felt pulled between the two conventions, between two identities.

Daily young adult activities included morning prayer, evening worship, luncheon discussions, social time and seminars geared toward young adults and church leaders interested in involving young adults in their congregations. Core participants in these activities varied, but numbered on average 30 to 40 people.

Three lunch discussions, which focused on homosexuality, racism and a forum with church leaders, drew the most interaction and intentional discussion about young adult involvement in the church. The five church leaders at Tuesday's lunch were Jim Schrag, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) general secretary; George Stoltzfus, Mennonite Church (MC) general secretary; Helmut Harder, Conference of Mennonites in Canada general secretary; Dennis Good, executive secretary of the GC Commission on Education (COE), and Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM).

At the luncheon, Chad Martin of Pittsburgh presented an informal proposal that young adults be a recognized constituency, much like United Native Ministries or the African-American Mennonite Association, and be given representation on the Constituency Leadership Council (CLC). Martin said this would make it possible for young adults to be well-represented in the church.

Schrag welcomed Martin's proposal and said that "a young adult constituency on the CLC could serve as a catalyst ... to make sure that group has a voice in the church."

Next generation: Malinda Berry, Elkhart, Ind., serves a participant at a young adult worship at St. Louis 99.

The gathering of young adults at St. Louis was facilitated jointly by the Young Adult Network (YAN), a grass-roots network in the Mennonite Church (now funded through MBCM), and the Young Adult Reference Council, a project of COE. These two main resources have been developing for about 10 years. This group consisted of Ken Hawkley, COE staff from Powell, Ohio; Stan Shantz, a pastor from Glendale, Ariz., and Wes Bontreger, a pastor in Goshen, Ind. The group grew and became the YAN, which has been meeting annually for the past six years.

On the business side of things, several young adult delegates participated in delegate sessions. The MC General Board had two members under the age of 35, but with integration, the U.S. Executive Board's youngest member will be 36.

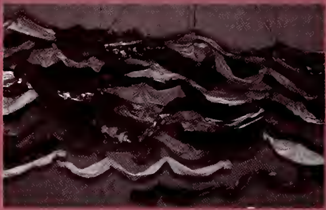
During the last joint delegate session on Tuesday, Tara Covelens, a GC delegate from Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church, and a student at Eastern Mennonite University, admonished the delegate body to include young adults in the business of the church: "There were several times when I was passed over with handouts at the delegate sessions—I imagine people thought I was a wayward youth."

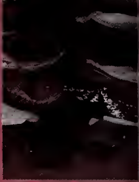
Martin said, "What is the use of integration if the next generation of Mennonites isn't involved in the church?"—*Jessica King*

> There were several times when I was passed over with handouts at the delegate sessions—I imagine people thought I was a wayward youth.—*Tara Covelens, delegate*

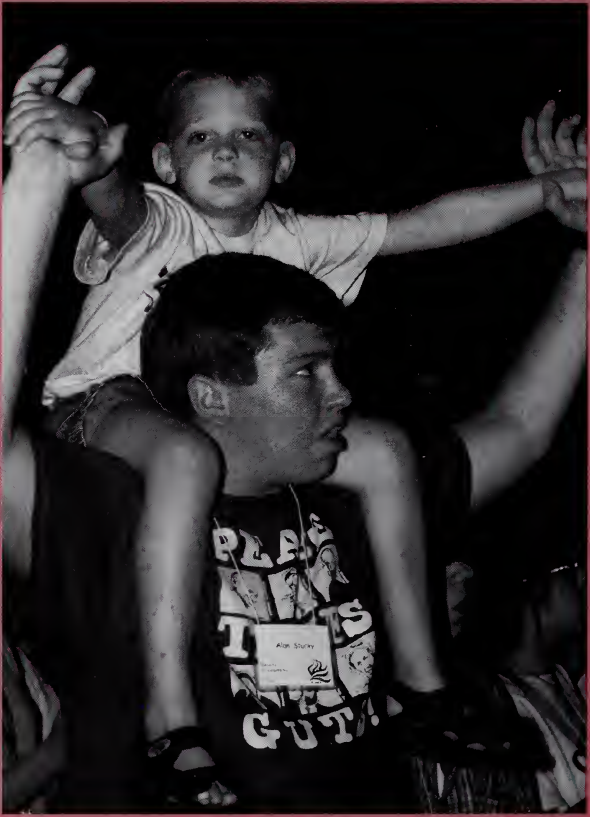
Purposes of young adult convention

- To encounter God in worship;
- To develop a better understanding of the Anabaptist faith and catch a glimpse of the larger Mennonite Church across Canada, the United States and Puerto Rico;
- To find a place to deal with pain and brokenness and have an opportunity to make new commitments to Christ and the church;
- To embrace, experience and be transformed by the uniqueness and diversity of the Mennonite Church;
- To renew old friendships, make new friendships and build bridges of integration: GC/MC, racial/ethnic, rural/urban and between youth and adults.





Along the top of this spread are shots from the river of prayer that served as a backdrop for adult worship at St. Louis 99. Individuals and congregations wrote prayers on blue cloths and tied them to a wire wall. Allison Graber (left) and Denise Banman of Newton, Kan., sign their names to a wall (below) at River City in the Trans World Dome, while other youth play basketball. Youth and children enjoy worship (right). A closeup of the river of prayer (below right) shows the words to a prayer many shared.



ORD HEAR OUR PRAYERS

A conventiongoer (left) takes a nap during Sunday's break from business. During a vigil near the Gateway Arch by Christian Peacemaker Teams (below), CPTer Rich Meyer (right) talks about Palestinian concerns with a businessman who stopped by. CPT held four vigils in four days at the Arch.

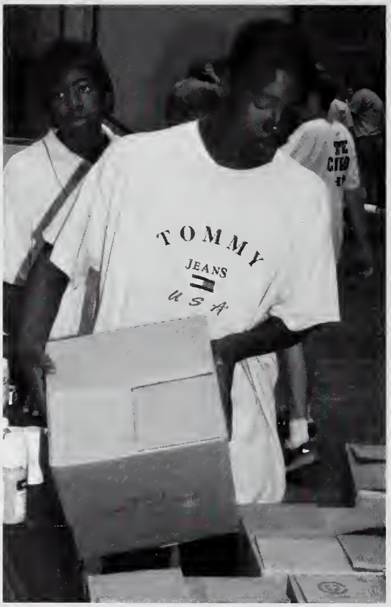
Lawrence Hart (above) pours water into a pot made by Priscilla Wero, in a remembering ceremony at the July 23 worship. People from various geographic and ethnic backgrounds poured water into the pot from rivers representing those backgrounds. Women from the Los Angeles Faith Chapel praise team (left) sing at the Mennonite Women dinner on July 24. Mennonite comedians Ted and Lee (right) dramatize the experience of liberation at the parting of the Red Sea.

COME TO THE RIVER

St. Louis 99

'Activities with purpose and meaning'

Junior high events include worship, service and fun



Packed and stacked: Junior high youth convention participant Derick Ward of St. Louis stacks a box of health and hygiene supplies for refugees in the Balkans. As their service project, the junior high youth assembled more than 160 refugee kits, to be distributed by Mennonite Central Committee.

The woman had a question: "What kind of a group is this? I was on my way to breakfast, but I heard the music and I had to come and see what was happening in here. And I stayed for the rest of the singing and for the speaker. I had to come and ask you what kind of a group this is."

Imagine hundreds of 12- to 14-year olds clapping and singing "Celebrate Jesus, Celebrate!" and the visitor's query is understood. Energy and enthusiasm have an attracting power, and both were had in abundance at the junior high youth convention at St. Louis 99.

The junior high gathering, which drew nearly 400 people, was held on the campus of Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, 22 miles from the America's Center and Trans World Dome convention complex in downtown St. Louis, the site of the rest of St. Louis 99.

For most participants, the convention was the first time they had participated in large worship services that were designed specifically for them or that were accompanied by flying beach balls and balloons.

"They don't know how to worship yet," said planning committee member Patrice Claassen from North Newton, Kan. "Part of the job is teaching them how to worship or to worship in new ways."

Worship events included presentations by keynote speaker Rick McNary from Potwin, Kan., and his ventriloquist doll Skyler Hayes; concerts by Ken Medema and by Doug and

Convention coordination and cover-ups

Couple brings experience to St. Louis 99 logistics work

Get 9,700 convention participants where they need to be on time with a minimum of snafus and fuss—for most folks that would be a logistical nightmare. For Marv and Lee Schmucker, it's all in a day's work. Long days, of course.

The Schmuckers, from Wichita, Kan., were logistics coordinators for St. Louis 99. That meant directing some 100 volunteers to take care of all the details connected with the adult, youth, junior high and children's conventions and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC)and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) delegate assemblies—often meeting simultaneously.

"Our goal is to make the logistics transparent so that people can enjoy themselves and worship and praise God," Marv said. "No one needs to know if we're operating by plan A or plan B."

Said Lee, "Recover, then cover up—that's how we told our volunteers to respond to the snags that always develop when this many people come together."

St. Louis 99 was the third large Mennonite gathering the Schmuckers have coordinated. They also did the GC-MC convention at Wichita in 1995 and the MC convention in Orlando, Fla., in 1997.

Why do they do it? "Our travel schedules make it impossible for us to do church work

Our goal is to make the logistics transparent so that people can enjoy themselves and worship and praise God.

—Marv Schmucker

Jude Krehbiel's duo Road Less Travelled, performances by Ted and Lee and by Sojourners from Goshen (Ind.) College. Carol Duerksen and Maynard Knepp from Goessel, Kan., told stories, and Mary Kay Kreider from St. Louis spoke and led activities. Corey Miller, pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, spoke at the closing service, during which participants were given the chance to share a drink of water and to request individual prayer.

The junior high youth joined the adult and youth conventions in St. Louis for Faith Family Day on July 25, where some of the junior high participants served as ushers in the joint worship service. Recreational activities included bowling, swimming, roller skating, basketball and a visit to Raging Rivers Water Park in Grafton, Ill.

Participants also completed a service project during the convention, assembling more than 160 refugee kits for Mennonite Central Committee to send to the Balkans. Vern Preheim from the MCC Central States office in North Newton spoke to the group about the kits and the agency's work in general.

Convention planners felt it important that the participants be offered a range of activities but that many of them be worship- and learning-related activities. "We did very little that was just entertaining," said planning committee chair Delon Martens from Haven, Kan. "We tried to provide activities with purpose and meaning."

Their efforts were met with approval. "This was great," said Val Tambly, a sponsor from Windsor, Ont. "We never experienced anything like this when we were kids. And I wish we would have."—*Tammy Duvanel Unruh*

In the money: Junior high youth convention participants gather the money collected in the offering at the July 25 morning worship service, at which some of the junior high youth served as ushers. St. Louis 99 adult offerings raised more than $33,000 for convention expenses and Mennonite Central Committee relief efforts in the Balkans. The youth offerings raised $27,000 for a variety of efforts around the world.

OLD NAVY
ONARDO

Lying around: Emily Baer of Goshen, Ind. (front left), and Joe Hartman of Howe, Ind. (front right), join friends to take a break during the junior high youth convention.

Servant leadership: St. Louis 99 logistics coordinators Lee and Marv Schmucker—and their radio to keep them in contact with the some 100 convention volunteers. "This is one way we can use our skills to serve the church," Marv said.

on a weekly basis," Lee said.

The Schmuckers, members of Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita, have a training and consulting business that takes them around the world speaking and leading seminars and workshops. "This is one way we can use our skills to serve the church, to give something back to the church," Marv said.

Lee adds: "Once our feet heal and we get some sleep, then we know why we do this. It's the relationships we develop working with our volunteers and meeting all kinds of people at these events."

Will they do it again? "Now's not the time to answer that," Marv said on the last day of St. Louis 99 as his two-way radio crackled with another volunteer question.

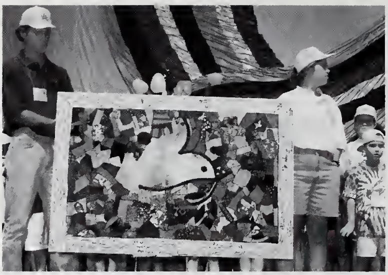
But then he and Lee admitted they have already agreed to coordinate the Mennonite Economic Development Associates convention in Norfolk, Va., in November and the annual gathering of Mennonite Health Services in Williamsburg, Va., in March 2000.—*J. Lorne Peachey*

Global guests

Countries represented by the 19 foreign guests at St. Louis 99 were: France, one guest; Guatemala, three guests; Honduras, one guest; Hong Kong, two guests; India, two guests; Mexico, seven guests; Paraguay, one guest; Philippines, two guests.

COME TO THE RIVER

St. Louis 99



Celebration rising: Several hundred children and their adult leaders brought energy and exuberance from the children's convention to the adult sessions (right), where they presented a collage they made using the new Mennonite Church logo and fabric scraps (above).

Diversity and worship convention themes for tomorrow's church

The crowd of adults, quietly anticipating their final Bible study at St. Louis 99, snapped to attention when Chuck Neufeld's resonant voice commanded, "Welcome tomorrow's church."

More than 200 children, sporting bright yellow baseball caps and waving balloons, poured onto the lecture hall stage on July 27. A quick chord on Neufeld's guitar signaled the young conventiongoers to burst out singing "All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir," their theme song. The St. Louis 99 children's convention, for children in grades one through six, celebrated diversity and God's inclusive love.

The children came to the adult Bible study to present a piece of art they had created: the solid lines of the new Mennonite Church logo—a dove with an olive branch—in the center of a collage of hundreds of colorful fabric scraps. The artists had learned about the new church and its logo as they worked. Their gift will be displayed in denominational offices for the next year.

Creating their artwork was one of numerous group activities that underscored the theme of diversity. During the convention, children buzzed around their leaders in 10 or more activity centers. One group tested braille typewriters or "wrote" music by gluing split peas to paper to create the raised configurations blind people read. Others groups discovered the importance of facial expressions and body language in signing for the deaf. Big Blue the clown (Norma Peters Duerksen from Smithville, Ohio) helped still other groups understand how the "differently abled" use their gifts for God.

Stories and crafts from India, Japan and Botswana, ethnic instruments, cooperative building, creative writing, painting, puppets, puzzles and games from cards to hoola hoop contests engaged children in groups of as many as 20 for part of each day.

A team worked with worship leaders Bonnie and Chuck Neufeld to plan one day's worship.

"For the call to worship, we pretended to plant a garden," said 10-year-old Kate Walker from Bluffton, Ohio. The intent, she said, was to show that "people all over the world can work together."

"We need to encourage children from a young age to be part of the congregation," said Bonnie Neufeld, who is co-pastor with her hus-

The blood of ...

More than 80 St. Louis 99 participants gave blood during a Red Cross blood drive at the convention.

Making her mark: Kiera Stenson from Quakertown, Pa., works on the collage the Children's Convention presented at the St. Louis 99 adult sessions. Each child chose a piece of material to represent themselves and glued it around the logo of the new Mennonite Church. The children's names form the collage's frame.

band at Community Mennonite Church of Markham, Ill.

Added Chuck, "My own passion is that worship should be a collaborative event for worshipers. God is the audience and we should do everything we can to express our delight in God."

That's what the children and leaders did with exuberance each morning. Music—both softly sung contemplative songs and lively choruses with clapping and foot-stomping—formed a huge part of each day's worship.

"Praise is a whole body experience," said Chuck after one session, somewhat breathless and dripping with sweat.

Each day Michelle Bontrager from Merriam, Kan., who is deaf, and Myron Yoder from Middlebury, Ind., signed the entire worship service, which included Scripture memorization and a Bible story drama by college students.

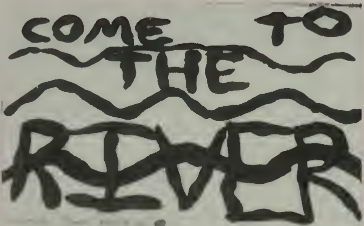
"The kids were right on target with what was going on [in worship]," said Jeff Shenk from Elkhart, Ind., who helped guide group discussion after each day's worship.

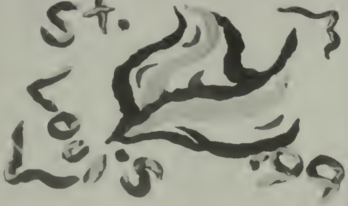
Registration peaked at 316, said children's convention coordinator June Thomsen from Bluffton, Ohio. She began planning in March 1998 and recruited a 10-member worship team and 30 volunteer group leaders who modeled diversity. At least 50 parents helped with field trips to the zoo and the science center.—*Ferne Burkhardt*

We need to encourage children from a young age to be part of the congregation.—*Bonnie Neufeld*

How great thou arts

From the children's convention's collage to the pottery in the adult worship sessions to the myriad expressions of music, the arts permeated much of St. Louis 99. Dramatic presentations included "Beyond the Dream" (right), an exploration of the roots of Anabaptism given by alumni of Eastern Mennonite Missions' Youth Evangelism Service program. Other stage productions included "Smoke on the Mountain" by a Bluffton (Ohio) College troupe and "The Creation Chronicles" by the comedy duo of Ted & Lee. The Association of Mennonites in the Arts sponsored several "creative centers" in the America's Center convention complex, where people could express themselves in clay (middle and lower right) and crayon and marker (below).





In the camera eye

Aspiring filmmaker Steve Holyer and crew were recording St. Louis 99 for a documentary on Mennonites' transitions from rural to urban people. Holyer is from Dallas, where he is a member of Peace Mennonite Church. He was introduced to Mennonites through contacts with the Mennonite Voluntary Service unit in Dallas.

Deck 'em

Among the Youth Convention recreational activities was the traditional game of Dutch Blitz played in a non-traditional way: with oversized cards made out of posterboard that had to be run out onto the floor to be placed in their appropriate piles. Organizers billed it as a "full-body contact sport." Said player Kate Becker from Newton, Kan., "I never knew you could get floor burns playing Dutch Blitz."

Heat doesn't dampen service projects

Armed with energy and water, more than 5,000 volunteer

With the temperature hovering around the century mark, Edward Flynn was appealing to the several dozen people cleaning and landscaping. "Please come inside, it's really hot out here," urged Flynn, a security guard at the Herbert Hoover Boys and Girls Club in north St. Louis. "I don't want any of you passing out."

It took several pleas until he finally ordered several dozen Mennonite volunteers to come inside to cool off.

Despite the heat and humidity during St. Louis 99, some 1,000 conventiongoers loaded onto school buses each day to volunteer at 29 locations with 20 development agencies, youth services, retirement communities and other agencies throughout the St. Louis area. More than 5,000 youth and adults worked on service projects during St. Louis 99.

At the Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club on July 24, several dozen youth and adults worked to clean the grounds. Many of the volunteers noticed the economic disparity between downtown—with its professional buildings, stores, hotels and historic sites—and lower-class north St. Louis.

"For us, it is a new experience to be that close to a facility like this," said Rich Esh from Morgantown, Pa.

Added Nonie Wiebe from Didsbury, Alta.: "I really like that we came over here. If we would not have done this we would have missed it all."

Meanwhile at Dignity House, a community and cultural center in north St. Louis, about a dozen volunteers helped clean and fix the building. "It's really neat giving like this and doing good stuff—and it's fun," said Rachel Voth from Topeka, Kan.

"Their work truly supports the ministry of Dignity House," said Dignity House director Lynette Maxwell. "The more we can do together, the more the community will benefit."

Many of the youth volunteers admitted they were also benefitting, learning practical skills they could use later in life. Justin Williams from Wakarusa, Ind., got experience patching the bricks on the outside of Dignity House.

"It's been fun," he said, "and I'm learning a lot about repair work."

The hot weather also did not stop some 100 youth and a handful of sponsors from serving at the Matthew Dickey Boys Club in north St. Louis on July 26. With water bottles in hand, the volunteers scoured a baseball field, picking up trash and cutting down weeds underneath the bleachers.

"It's good to get out," said Greg Hartman from Greencastle, Pa. "We've been sitting down all week."

Brian R. Hook

Garden spot: Matt Carlson from Hatfield, Pa. (left), and Earl Steady from Westover, Md., clean a flower garden at Crown Center retirement home during St. Louis 99. More than 5,000 conventiongoers volunteered for service projects.

He also mentioned the importance for youth to volunteer their time. "It represents that youth have good ideas and that we are not always causing trouble," Hartman said.

Added Angela Richer from Wauseon, Ohio: "It's good to know that we are doing something for someone else."

Krieg Robinson, the Matthew Dickey Boys Club administrative services coordinator, said the volunteers could not have come at a better time. "We have such a small staff," he said. "This puts us six to eight months ahead of schedule."

Across town in south St. Louis, convention participants could also be found on service projects. About a dozen volunteers cleaned floors and painted walls at DuBourg House retirement home. Some of the volunteers also sat down to play bingo with some of the home's residents.

Lincoln Nafziger from Archbold, Ohio oversaw the service work at DuBourg House. "We are not only doing cleanup work," he said. "We are also around people we can talk to about Christ."

While the youth and adults mopped floors and painted walls, DuBourg House custodian Levi Miller watched in amazement. "It's helping me out, and I'm glad to see it," he said.

Even out in the suburbs, volunteers went

> **It's been fun, and I'm learning a lot about repair work.**
>
> *—Justin Williams*

And a push

Overheard under St. Louis' famous and mammoth Gateway Arch: "What we need is a really long swing."

into action. At Parkview Towers retirement center in University City on July 27, about a dozen youth and adults worked to clean out and touch up rooms for residents.

The day was a bit cooler, only about 90 degrees, and many of the youth were working inside an air-conditioned building. But the more comfortable work environment did not make the service experience any less meaningful.

"It's a humbling experience," said Ryan Springer from Goshen, Ind. "It's hard to imagine people living in this small apartment."

Some of the youth also found time to have fun while expressing their faith. A couple of the youth sprayed the word Jesus with cleaner on one apartment wall. They then watched the cleaner run down the wall, cleaning away the grunge and dirt as it went.

Also in University City, another two dozen youth and sponsors helped clean the grounds at the Crown Center, a retirement home run by the National Council of Jewish Women. Some of the volunteers pulled weeds while others cleaned windows.

Megan Panning from Souderton, Pa., said volunteering for the service projects was fitting since she had such a great experience at the convention. "It's nice to be able to help and to give back to St. Louis," she said.—*Brian R. Hook*

Brian R. Hook

Clean sweep: St. Louis 99 service project participant Angela Richer from Wauseon, Ohio, sweeps a sidewalk outside a baseball field at Matthew Dickey Boys Club in north St. Louis. The club was one of 29 locations where more than 5,000 volunteers served over four days during the convention.

Family values

The top prayer request at the Youth Convention was for participants' parents "before they divorce."

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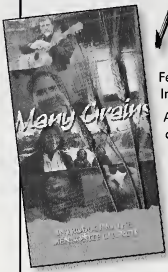

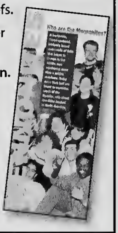

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EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

A century of mission work overseas

One hundred years after Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries first went to India, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), the sending agencies, celebrated at St. Louis 99 by launching a fund-raising campaign to begin a new century.

In 1999, the two denominations and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, which combined to form Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, are partners in the Second Century Campaign, a new $1 million fund-raising effort. It invites each household in the two bodies to commit $100 above its normal mission giving to a centennial fund.

Several hundred people attended the mission celebration on July 25. They heard that in 1898, after hours of discussion about a joint venture, the two boards "couldn't pull it off." In a skit describing the resulting separate missions, John E. Sharp and Jonathan Larson played the roles of J.A. Ressler and P.A. Penner, early Mennonite Church and General Conference workers, respectively, in India.

Ron Flaming, COM executive secretary, and Stanley Green, MBM president, chaired the festive event. It featured music led by Paul Dueck with his Paraguayan harp and a Latin American band; Scripture read in Cantonese, Spanish, German and Hindi by international guests; prayer for workers; and recognition of workers, board members and office staff. The earliest workers present were Ernest Bennett (1930s), S. Paul Miller (1940s) and Albert Bauman (1950s).

Flaming and Green shared a "look at the future," including plans for a global mission consultation in 2000 with church leaders from around the world. Green stressed the importance of international partners in discerning vision for the next century.

John Yoder, manager of the centennial fund, launched the Second Century Campaign. Donations may be directed to New Century of Mission, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4 in Canada, or P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370.

James Krabill, MBM vice president, introduced the MBM Mission Insight series of publications, and Tina Block Ediger, editor of *Window to the World*, a collection of COM stories, was on hand to autograph copies of the book to conclude the celebration.—*Ferne Burkhardt*

COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

Celebrate mission: Pat (left) and Rad (right) Houmphan and their family, mission workers in Thailand, sing at the mission celebration at St. Louis 99.

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COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

All ages take part in Faith Family Day

Sunday means worship, then a multitude of activities

Billed as Faith Family Day, Sunday at St. Louis 99 began with the faith component when more than 7,300 children, youth, young adults and adults came together to worship God. For the rest of the day, families scattered to River City and beyond for a multitude of planned activities or to grab the only available free time to be tourists.

Many youth arrived for the 9 a.m. service by 8 a.m. For the next hour they blew bubbles, tossed beach balls and balloons, chanted responsive challenges in increasing decibels from group to group, scrambled for the few remaining seats or mused on the many meanings of water, gurgling from a fountain on stage and sketched on a huge mural backdrop.

The energy transferred to the music when Marilyn Houser Hamm, Ken Nafziger, Paul Dueck and the band took charge. Along with the lively songs, clapping and stomping, worshipers also praised God with the softly reverent "Holy, holy, holy, holy is thy name."

All ages took part in the service. Children led by Chuck and Bonnie Neufeld added several rousing songs they had learned at their convention, and junior high youngsters, decked out in matching yellow shirts, passed the offering buckets, collecting $9,480 for hurricane relief, Kosovo and rehabilitation work in Burgos, Spain.

A young adult drama team from Bluffton (Ohio) College dramatized Psalm 1, and soloist Dorothy Harding from Atlanta set the stage for the morning message by Leslie Francisco III, pastor of Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Va. He geared his message about the power and results of choice almost entirely to the youth.

Welcome break: The afternoon offered a welcome break from the tightly scheduled business meetings and children's events that kept families separated on other days. While some families visited the famous Gateway Arch, Union Station or downtown St. Louis, thousands gathered around numerous storytelling and performance stages all through the America's Center corridors. Others took in concerts or browsed the exhibits and the bookstore.

"It was encouraging to see parents with their children, being so nice and kind to their

It was encouraging to see parents being so nice and kind to their kids [unlike many parents at the mall].

—Ron Meyer

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kids," said Ron Meyer from Scottdale, Pa., noting the contrast at a mall where parents were "yelling at their kids and jerking them around."

At the bookstore, the hottest item, *Veggie Tales*, a children's video about the power of words, sold out fast, but a fresh supply arrived before the end of the convention. Books and the new music CD/cassette *Songs to Live By* also sold well.

The River City complex held many attractions. Youngsters grappled their way to the top of the 25-foot climbing wall, spun in the Orbiton's hoops, tried a bungee run (the activities with the longest line-ups), popped balloons in an imitation Sumo wrestling ring, clambered through inflated, rubber monsters, played foosball or giant Dutch Blitz.

Parents cheered the more daring activities from the sidelines but joined their kids in things like table tennis, mini golf, clay modeling, painting or table games.

The evening offered more choices for anyone not yet exhausted: youth worship, concerts and drama.

Nathan Klassen had a hard time identifying what was the most fun, but he did not hesitate in saying, "The food was the worst." Not all kids agreed.

Parents and kids, however, agreed that Faith Family Day was memorable and fun. They voted unanimously that it be on the agenda for the next convention.—*Ferne Burkhardt*

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Fun and frolic: Carol Rose (left), Wichita, Kan., painted children's faces during the afternoon of Faith Family Day. At far left, convention-goers walk in the hot sun outside the America's Center on Faith Family Day.

Retreat seeks renewed peacemaking

People of color call for attention to international issues

It had all the marks of an evangelical retreat: careful Bible study, plentiful worship, moving testimonies, passionate appeals and powerful prayers. But the gospel message had an unusual twist—it was time to renew a commitment to Christian peacemaking.

Among the forested hills outside St. Louis, 107 Mennonite adults and children (including eight Canadians) met July 20-23, just prior to St. Louis 99, in Fenton, Mo., for a retreat called, "Of Roots and Branches: Strengthening the Passion for Peace and Justice in the New Mennonite Church," sponsored by the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

Congregational peacemaking: "This was [a time of] visioning and dreaming [about] the new denomination. Thinking how we can keep peace central to who we are as a people," said organizer Susan Mark Landis, minister of peace and justice for the former Mennonite Church. It was also a time for peacemakers to encourage each other and focus on the task of congregational peacemaking.

Landis said planners invited every congregation—using a mailing list of 1,400—to send a representative to the gathering.

"I certainly would like to see the Mennonite church in our area become more proactive about conflict resolution and community transformation. And let's be strengthened in our environmental concerns," said Steve Cheramie Risingsun, pastor of Native Christian Fellowship, Gretna, La., in one of the main addresses.

"There is a new core value, based on a culture of fear, and it has to do with a preoccupation with safety. We have a new idol, a new icon of security. ... So, as peace evangelists, we have to address these fears," said Michael Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle, Bronx, N.Y., in his address.

There is a new core value, based on a culture of fear, and it has to do with a preoccupation with safety. We have a new idol, a new icon of security.

—Michael Banks

Lois Barrett led two morning Bible studies, showing how the congregation is a central place for peacemaking. "Factionalism gets a very bad rap in the New Testament. It is one of the few things for which people should get kicked out of the church," said the executive secretary of the General Conference's Commission on Home Ministries.

Peace comes when people who were formerly hostile to one another sit side by side. "People have to be taught how to practice it," Barrett said.

Dreams of peace: Ted Lewis of Pawnee Rock, Kan., provided music at the Of Roots and Branches retreat.

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My dream is that every young person should do one year of service. That's a wild dream, but I think it would revolutionize our churches, because our kids are so wealthy.—*a participant at the Of Roots and Branches retreat*

Seminars were held on five topics: congregational peacemaking, becoming anti-racist congregations, economic justice, Christian Peacemaker Teams and the environment.

On the evening of the second day, people reported back from their seminars. "We hear it differently," said Michelle Armster, Lancaster, Pa., as she reported what was said at a lunch meeting of people of color.

"The issues of peace and justice do not relate to where we're coming from. … We would like to see the same attention given to international issues as national issues, like dealing with indigenous peoples, land rights, fishing rights. These are issues that affect people in the Mennonite church," Armster said to the entire group.

People-of-color stories: "Our belief is that many of the international issues—that are held so strongly—are right around the corner [in our own countries], if you take a look. We would like to see in our curriculum people-of-color stories. We would like anyone involved in peace and justice in the denomination to go through Damascus Road [anti-racism] training," said Armster.

On the final day, before St. Louis 99, the group assembled to voice its vision for the new Mennonite Church and draft a statement.

But the group got bogged down in process. It was "chaotic," said one, with no less than 24 important issues written down on newsprint in front of the group.

Banks said, "We could spend all day working at this [statement for the Mennonite assembly]. But the people on the margins don't give a damn about it."

"They don't care squat about it," echoed Dorothy Harding, Atlanta.

Participants' dreams of peace for the Mennonite Church include the following: dealing with racism (and classism and sexism), educating for peace and justice, lifestyle issues, witnessing to the state, integrating evangelism with peace, broadly communicating Mennonite peace values, encountering the gospel through experience, embracing the cities, integrating prayer with peace witness, listening to brothers and sisters in other countries.

"My dream is that every young person should do one year of service. That's a wild dream, but I think it would revolutionize our churches, because our kids are so wealthy," said one participant.

At the end of the gathering, a smaller group compiled the issues and dreams into a statement for the larger church. This statement was published in the daily news sheet at St. Louis 99.—*Aiden Schlichting Enns*

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- **Landis Homes** is seeking a part-time (32 hours/week) ***associate chaplain*** to work closely with those in health care. Credentialing for ministry is preferred. Apply at Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **Mount Joy Mennonite Church** seeks ***administrative assistant/ bookkeeper***, 30 hrs/week. Communication, organizational, advanced computer skills, including knowledge of financial software, experience desired. Position available late August. Contact 717-653-5660.

- **East Goshen Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is seeking a pastoral team member with emphasis on ***youth and young adults***. Contact Search Team, East Goshen Mennonite Church, 17861 SR 4, Goshen, IN 46528; email egmenno@npcc.net; web site eastgoshen.in.us.mennonite.net

- **New book: *As He Leads Is Joy: Dora M. Taylor, Missionary Nurse in Honduras*** by Marie E. Cutman. 300 pages, 100 pictures, $14.99. $3.00 postage and handling first book. $.50 each addition to same address. Pay in USA funds. PA residents add 6% tax. Marie E. Cutman, P.O. Box 22, Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-9926.

- **Akron Mennonite Church**, Akron, Pa., a multistaffed congregation, seeks ***senior pastor*** with strong biblical, theological and human relations training from an Anabaptist perspective. M.Div. degree preferred.

  Send resume to Jerry Shank, 531 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522; email jeshank@redrose.net

- **Leaders** to launch new division of *top pharmaceutical company* into Canada, spring of year 2000. From B.C. to N.B. Possibilities in the States too. Email stewardhg@juno.com or call 661-831-6649. Leave message.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has openings for full-time positions in middle school ***science/math*** and ***history/language arts*** for the fall.

  Send resume to Gary G. Sensenig, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Newton, Kan., seeks an ***associate pastor*** with assignment in outreach ministries and Christian nurture support. Important characteristics include outgoing personality, faith-sharing passion, developing ministries out into the community, Anabaptist conviction.

  Contact Ron Ratzlaff, search committee chair, 3002 Wildwood Ct., North Newton, KS 67117; 316-284-2566.

- **Camp Friedenswald**, located 30 minutes north of Goshen, Ind., seeks a ***maintenance assistant*** and a ***kitchen assistant***. These full-time, year-round salaried jobs are new positions. Compensation includes housing and medical insurance.

  For information, contact Christopher Gill, Camp Friedenswald, 15406 Watercress Drive, Cassopolis, MI 49031; 616-476-9744; email friedenswald@juno.com

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***science/biology/ word-processing teacher*** (75 percent).

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a nonprofit Christian organization providing vital income to artisans in developing countries, wishes to ***expand its volunteer base*** at its Akron, Pa., warehouse and stores in Ephrata, Pa., and Montreat, N.C. Individuals or groups for a day or weeklong commitments are needed. Also needed are short-term volunteers (3-4 months). Housing and food allowance are provided for short-termers.

  Contact Sherrie Ober, 717-859-8117; email smo@villages-mcc.org

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president of clinical services***, a new position providing administrative supervision and guidance to various departments including Health Services. Qualifications include a college degree in health administration or related management field. Supervisory experience in long-term care preferred. Nursing Home Administrator license helpful.

  Submit resume to Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; or call 717-581-3936.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***athletic trainer*** for 15-sport athletic program. Includes administrative duties. Master's degree preferred. National Athletic Trainers Association Certification required. Nine-month position, 3/4-time beginning Aug. 16, 1999. Possibility of increasing position to full-time.

  If interested, please send a letter of application, resume and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4105. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Employment opportunity**—***associate conference minister*** to serve with Western District Conference with offices in North Newton, Kan. Duties include oversight for congregations and pastors and resource for evangelism and church planting. Three-fourths time position to begin early fall 1999, to be located in Texas, preferably the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Preference given to people fluent in Spanish and English, with M.Div. degree and pastoral experience. Salary according to denominational guidelines.

  Contact Marvin Zehr, Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; 316-283-6300; fax 316-283-0620; email marvz@mennowdc.org

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is currently taking applications for ***school administrator*** for the school year beginning August 2000. We are looking for a candidate with a master's in education or administration, and five years teaching experience. Lititz Area Mennonite School provides a K-8 Christ-centered education within an Anabaptist framework to Christian families in its geographical area. With an enrollment of 240, we are located in a semi-rural section of Lancaster County.

  If you are interested in this position, please send your application to Board Chairman, Lititz Area Mennonite School, 1050 East Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543.

- **Ten Thousand Villages** is actively recruiting for the following:

  Company store manager in Northampton, Mass. Qualifications for this position include a degree in business administration, marketing, and/or experience and training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability; ability to attractively display merchandise and arrange store layout; customer service experience; ability to train, schedule and supervise sales clerks; experience in ordering, bookkeeping and inventory maintenance; interest and/or experience in advertising and promotion; and support of and commitment to the mission of Ten Thousand Villages.

  Company store assistant manager in Northampton, Mass. Qualifications for this position include experience and/or training in retail sales; managerial experience and ability coupled with good organizational skills; willing and able to learn a variety of tasks under the direction of the manager; customer service experience; ability to cover the responsibilities of the manager in his/her absence; and support of and commitment to the mission of Ten Thousand Villages.

  All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

  For more information, or to receive a copy of the job descriptions, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns, Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Department at 717-859-1151; email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary invites applications and nominations for: **Dean**

AMBS seeks a dean who is committed to Jesus Christ, the Scriptures, and the work of the church; has deep roots in Anabaptist faith and practice; will be visionary in helping shape theological education; holds a Ph.D or Th.D and has teaching experience (preferably at the graduate level); has supervisory, administrative, relational and team-building skills.

Deadline for applications: November 1, 1999.
Position is to be filled no later than July 1, 2001.
Send nominations, or letter of application with vitae, to:
J. Nelson Kraybill, President
AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517
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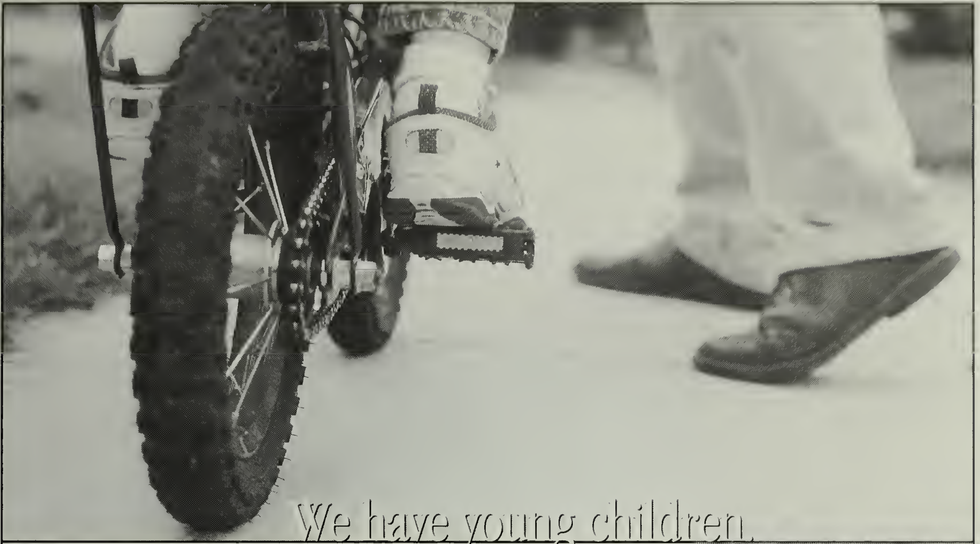
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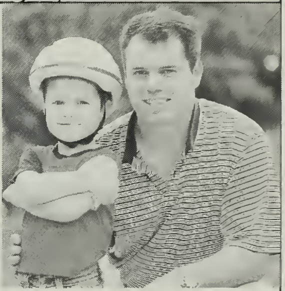

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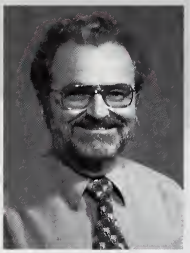

J. Lorne Peachey

When NPR and security and maintenance hear us sing again

We sang the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah* at St. Louis 99. All 2,000 plus of us who stayed for the final adult worship service. From memory, no scores.

From the outside, we must have sounded pretty good. Jim Dryden, a reporter for National Public Radio (NPR), on "Morning Edition" the next day compared us to a choir. Our singing also drew numerous America's Center security and maintenance personnel into the hall.

From the inside, those of us singing knew it would take much more practice were we to consider ourselves a harmonious choir. We began well enough, with "Hallelujah!" reverberating off the steel girders of the cavernous hall. But when we got to "And he shall reign forever and ever," the basses lost their way, you could not hear the tenors, and sopranos and altos sang numerous notes not in Handel's original.

In many ways, that was a fitting end to St. Louis 99. Most of the five days together were harmonious, with participants united as one voice. Adult worship sessions were rich in singing and filled with symbolism. Many thrilled when they heard that 1,800 youth had made commitments to Jesus Christ during a worship service. There were also reports of good times for junior highs and children.

The faithful are hoping that eventually their churches will blend together as well as their voices.—*Jim Dryden, NPR*

Much of the business also had delegates in harmony. They passed all the resolutions necessary to form Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA—two groups which will make up the new Mennonite Church.

It was with the discussion of membership guidelines, however, that the strain came. While Canadians were able to accept the proposed guidelines with a 95 percent vote, on the U.S. side convictions and opinions didn't blend as well. A call by Pacific Southwest Conference to join Canada in adopting the guidelines failed to carry the necessary two-thirds majority. Instead, delegates did agree to consider these guidelines for "first reading," with more study and discussion during the next two years.

But what brought the most disharmony was a resolution from the floor for the assembly to reaffirm the church's faith statements "that sex is reserved for a man and a woman in marriage." Supporters said it was important to take a strong stand on homosexuality. Opponents felt they were being manipulated into something unnecessary, since the new confession of faith already says the same thing.

In the end, 46.6 percent of General Conference Mennonite Church and 72.2 percent of Mennonite Church delegates voted for the resolution. That meant defeat, since two-thirds approval was needed in both groups to pass.

As we left that final business session, facial expressions and body language showed a dispirited group. None were happy, some were angry. But that didn't stop us from singing together later that evening. And, by the time we came to the end, we had gotten it together again, and "King of Kings" gave way to "Hallelujah!" in a stirring finale.

Will the same thing happen for a new church and the issue of membership? Much of that will depend on how we choose to interpret St. Louis 99, including the final failed resolution. If we see this as disharmony or unfaithfulness, then we will question whether we belong in the same choir. If, however, we see it as birth pangs for a new church that God's Spirit is calling into being, then we will summon the will to keep working at our differences.

"The faithful are hoping that eventually their churches will blend together as well as their voices," Dryden summarized in his NPR report on "Morning Edition." As I watched security guards and maintenance personnel drift into the hall to listen to our singing, I knew we had to keep struggling. One guard even stepped away from her position to participate in Communion. When we learn the notes better, and achieve the harmony our world so much needs, next time maybe those who look on will all want to join us.—*jlp*

COME TO THE RIVER
St. Louis 99

theMennonite

August 17, 1999

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community economics

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Feeding the problem

Re "MCC U.S. Appeals to Constituents to Take Up Baskets as Part of Campaign to End Sanctions Against Iraq" (July 13): I am glad to hear of the work of Wanda Kraybill and others toward ending the sanctions and helping provide food to Iraq. However, I was uncomfortable with the emphasis placed on infant formula in the article.

Breast-feeding is the healthiest, cheapest, most available form of infant feeding. Indiscriminate formula donations interfere with breast-feeding in many ways (decreasing breast milk supply, introducing artificial nipple confusion and decreasing mother's confidence, to name a few) and increase a mother's dependence on outside sources. There is some need for formula in emergencies, but it needs to be carefully controlled and delivered in a sustainable way.

I urge Mennonite Central Committee and all people involved in relief work in crisis areas to take into account the guidelines of the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, the World Health Organization and others when it comes to infant feeding.

Often the argument surfaces about war-stressed mothers finding it hard to breast-feed. The opposite is more likely the case in that a mother who has had her breast-feeding disrupted by the introduction of formula will probably face the stress of scrounging for clean water, more formula, bottles and nipples. Because emergency conditions tend to aggravate health risks, a mother will also likely find herself with a sick baby and inadequate medical care.

We need to be cautious of "generous" donations of large quantities of infant formula and inappropriate medications to populations in crisis. To become agents of healing and hope, we must do all we can to encourage and support breast-feeding.—*Susan Horein, Madison, Wis.*

Whose sacrifice?

I don't recall ever finding myself agreeing and disagreeing with an opinion as I did with Harley Hofstetter's comments in the July 13 Readers Say. I agree wholeheartedly that Mennonites have been and are too judgmental of people who are or have been involved in the military. We need to love them as Jesus did and does. Also, I feel honored and privileged to live in this country. Even though I do not agree with the methods our country has used to secure our freedoms, I am glad we have them and will continue to celebrate civil holidays. I may choose to forgo celebrations of some events that are contrary to Jesus' teachings.

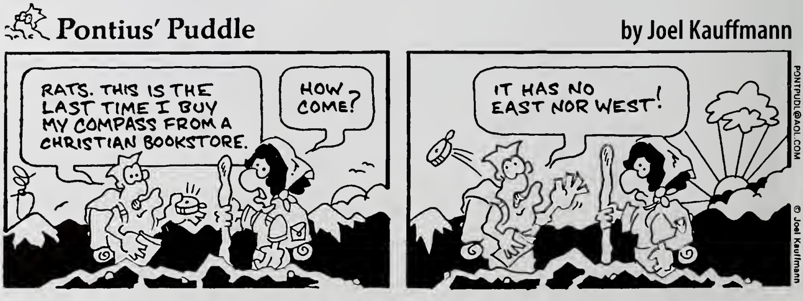
I disagree, however, with Hofstetter's reasoning regarding Jesus' bloodshed and the sacrifice our nation's military personnel have made. There is a distinct difference in the bloodshed Jesus used and that of the bloodshed the military uses: Jesus allowed his own blood to be shed without shedding anybody else's. The military is designed to shed others' blood while minimizing their own sacrifice.

I do respect those in the military who have lost their lives or were injured in military conflict. But let's not forget that the military is designed to take life, not sacrifice it. Jesus taught us to sacrifice our lives for the kingdom, not take them.—*Bryan Leaman, Louisville, Ohio*

Separate structures

I was impressed with the July 6 editorial ("Another Defining Moment for North American Mennonites"), and I saw some of that "new light streaming" at St. Louis 99.

I also appreciated Everett J. Thomas' Speaking Out on "The Implications of a Mennonite Church U.S." I feel that the three ramifications he listed for a separate U.S. structure may have helped some U.S. delegates see a new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Vol. 2, No. 30, August 17, 1999

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readers say

way of looking at it, and they then voted in favor of the resolutions recommended by the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

As a Canadian, I have been aware that there are separate issues in both Canada and the United States but received the impression from U.S. friends that we could work at all of them together. The new structures in Canada and the United States will allow each of us to work at them separately or together when it seems feasible.—*Glenn Zehr, Millbank, Ont.*

Vitamins for the soul

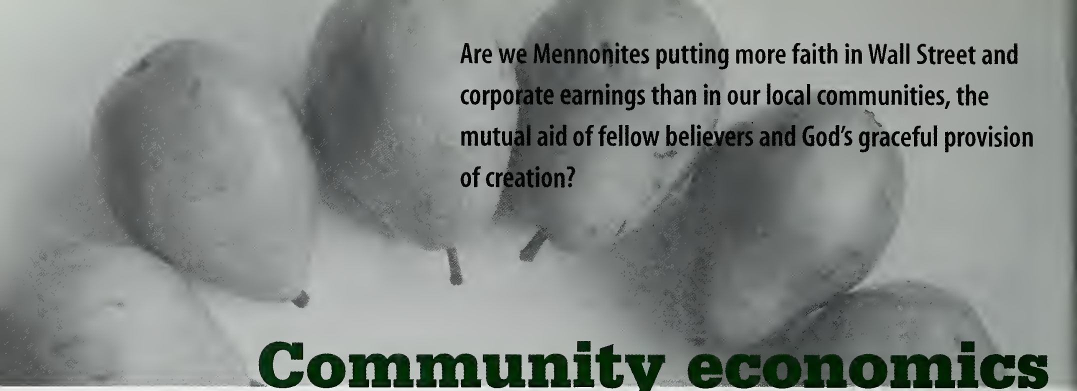
The astute readers of *The Mennonite* outdid themselves in the July 20 Readers Say, especially timely in these days of critical decision making affecting the church and its ministry for the next 20, 50 or 100 years. The following are some personal vitamins I've distilled for my soul from Vernon K. Rempel, Evan Oswald and Maynard R. Shirk:

- It's a sobering thought to realize that the person I'm talking to, and possibly disagreeing with, may be Jesus (Rempel).
- Purity/law or unity/love: Why should the choice be so divisive (Oswald)?
- At this eventful time, we're in bad shape if we can't laugh at ourselves (Shirk).—*D. Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.*

Clashing symbols

It seems that there is no possibility of changing the symbol for the integrated Mennonite Church. But I wonder if the joint executive committee would answer some questions: (1) Why was a cross not included? (2) Why was no provision made for input from congregations who will be using the symbol?—*Elvina N. Martens, Elkhart, Ind.*

Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt



Marilyn Nolt

Are we Mennonites putting more faith in Wall Street and corporate earnings than in our local communities, the mutual aid of fellow believers and God's graceful provision of creation?

Community economics

in an age of globalization

by Kent Davis Sensenig

> *I cannot think of any American who is not contributing in some way to destruction. The reason is simple: To live undestructively in an economy that is overwhelmingly destructive would require of any one of us, or of any small group of us, a great deal more work than we have yet been able to do. How can we divorce ourselves completely and yet responsibly from the technologies and powers that are destroying our planet? The answer is not yet thinkable … even though there are now groups and families and people everywhere in the country who have begun the labor of thinking it. … Once our personal connection to what is wrong becomes clear, then we have to choose: We can go on as before, recognizing our dishonesty and living with it the best we can, or we can begin the effort to change the way we think and live. The only real, practical, hope-giving way to remedy the fragmentation that is the disease of the modern spirit is a small and humble way … one must begin in one's own life the private solutions that can only in turn become public solutions.*
> —Wendell Berry in *The Unsettling of America* (Sierra, 1996)

We are caught up in an economic tempest called globalization. Nervous headlines daily monitor the ebb and flow of our globalizing economy as it teeters dangerously on the edge of a worldwide recession. This trend threatens our ability to create community economies that foster justice for the poor and ecological sustainability for the earth.

Globalization is founded on free markets and free trade and will largely be governed by transnational corporations. David Korten, in his book *When Corporations Rule the World* (Berrett-Koehler, 1995), contends that "the largest of these corporations reach into virtually every country of the world and exceed most governments in size and power. Increasingly it is the corporate interest more than the human interest that defines the policy agenda of states and international bodies, although this reality and its implications have gone largely unnoticed and unaddressed."

While the GNP may measure how fast money flows through the economy, it also records the rate we turn God's natural resources into garbage.

These conglomerates represent idolatrous modern-day examples of what the apostle Paul called principalities and powers (Colossians 2:15, Ephesians 6:12). To resist such powers the church must be faithful to "seek the shalom (salvation) of the city (culture)" where it is a resident alien (Jeremiah 29:7).

In his book *Conserving Communities*, Wendell Berry contends that "the great, centralizing economic entities of our time do not come into a place in order to improve it by 'creating jobs.' They come to take as much of value as they can take, as cheaply and quickly as they can take it. They are interested in 'job creation' only so long as the jobs can be done more cheaply by humans than by machines. They are not interested in the good health—economic or natural or human—of any place on this earth. And if you should undertake to appeal or complain to one of these great corporations on behalf of your community, you would discover something most remarkable: You would find that these organizations are organized expressly for the evasion of responsibility. They are structures in which … 'the buck never stops.' The buck is processed up the hierarchy until it finally is passed to 'the shareholders,' who characteristically are too widely dispersed, too poorly informed and too unconcerned to be responsible for anything. The idea of the modern corporation is to be (in terms of its own advantage) anywhere and (in terms of local accountability) nowhere. The message to common people, in other words, is this: Don't expect favors from your enemies."

Myths of globalization: The principal myth of globalization is the illusion of growth. Most free traders say the best measurement of our quality of life is the gross national product. But the GNP presents a distorted picture of a society's health. For example, driving a mile in a car contributes far more to the GNP than pedaling a mile on a bike, yet it is clear which makes for a more sustainable, livable society. Turning on your air conditioning contributes more to the GNP than opening a window, and relying on chemically produced, highly processed and shipped foods generates more dollars than raising one's own food organically or buying it in a less processed form from local producers. While the GNP may measure how fast money flows through the economy, it also records the rate we turn God's natural resources into garbage.

Another myth of globalization is that a postindustrial "information age" will generate more and more high-tech, high-skill, high-wage jobs for the world's workers. Even in the United States, however, a restructuring of the labor market since the 1970s has created a smaller sector of high-skill jobs and increasing demands for low-skill, low-wage workers. Three-fourths of all new jobs created in the booming Reagan years of supposed prosperity were in low-paying retail and service industry jobs. The U.S. Labor Department's employment projections for the next 10 years call for 225,000 new computer systems analysts and 165,000 new computer programmers. However, they also ask for 850,000 janitors, 750,000 sales clerks, 580,000 waiters, 520,000 fast-food helpers, 470,000 nurse aides/orderlies and 460,000 truck drivers. Only three of the top 25 "most-needed" jobs even require a college degree—nursing, teaching and engineering.

Corporations operating in the global economy want a labor force that is "fluid, flexible and disposable," in the words of social analyst Mary Hobogod. Job security is a thing of the past. While the average full-time worker in the United States puts in about a month more of overtime annually than was the case 20 years ago, the number of part-time workers desiring full-time hours has increased seven times over the same period. Another form of overwork not officially reported is what some call "the women's double shift," wherein working women average 80-hour weeks doing a combination of housework, childcare and paid employment.

While 80 percent of American workers have actually seen their real take-home pay decrease since 1973, corporate productivity has soared in the 1990s, and the wealthiest 10 percent of Americans now owns 90 percent of corporate stock—with a whopping 250 percent increase in dividends since 1980 to show for it. Meanwhile, the corporate share of the tax burden has dropped from 40 percent in the 1950s to 17 percent during the Reagan 1980s and a projected 11 percent for the year 2000. In 1991, 60 percent of U.S.-controlled firms and 74 percent of foreign firms doing business in the United States paid no taxes whatsoever.

Are we Mennonites putting more faith in Wall Street and corporate earnings than in our local communities, the mutual aid of fellow believers and God's graceful provision of creation? If not, what can we do—as households, as churches, as communities—to take concrete steps toward a more just, sustainable and healthy community economy?

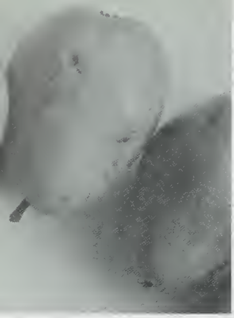
Rebuilding a community economy: Such a change must begin with a careful examination of our roles as consumers-producers in a globalizing marketplace. Wendell Berry argues that "a responsible consumer would be a critical consumer; would refuse to purchase the less good. And he [or she] would be a moderate consumer; he would know his needs and refuse to purchase what he did not need; he would sort among his needs and study to reduce them … the responsible consumer must also be in some way a producer. Out of his own resources and skills, he must be equal to some of his own needs. The household that can provide some of its own pleasures will not be helplessly dependent on the entertainment industry … and will not support it thoughtlessly out of boredom. The household that prepares its own meals in its own kitchen … exercises an influence on the food industry that reaches from the store all the way back to the seedsman. The household that produces some or all its own food will have proportionally greater influence."

Another form of overwork not officially reported is what some call "the women's double shift," wherein working women average 80-hour weeks doing a combination of housework, childcare and paid employment.

This suggests that the best foundation for a strong community economy is strong household economics and a strong local food economy. How might we begin to extricate ourselves from an American agribusiness industry where

- the food we eat travels, on average, more than 1,000 miles before it reaches our plate;
- crops are doused with up to a dozen chemicals and preservatives;
- God's good earth is treated with techniques developed for mines or factories;
- the energy inputs required for fossil fuel-intensive production far exceeds the energy value of the food consumed;
- migrant laborers are treated worse than serfs while harvesting our food;

- **Only three of the top 25 "most-needed" jobs require a college degree—nursing, teaching and engineering.**
- **While 80 percent of American workers have actually seen their real take-home pay decrease since 1973, corporate productivity has soared in the 1990s, and the wealthiest 10 percent of Americans now owns 90 percent of corporate stock—with a whopping 250 percent increase in dividends since 1980 to show for it.**
- **In 1991, 60 percent of U.S.-controlled firms and 74 percent of foreign firms doing business in the United States paid no taxes whatsoever.**



Marilyn Nolt

A shalom-filled community economy will be built upon the foundation of many just, well-organized and entrepreneurial household economies.

Community economics

continued from page 5

- excessive processing and packaging turns nutritious foodstuffs into Lucky Charms and TV dinners to the great profit of middlemen and the detriment of our health;
- fewer and fewer farm families and communities can survive in the predatory environment ruled over by corporate agriculture?

Here are five alternative options: (1) grow some of your food in a backyard or community garden, eating in season and preserving as much as you can for winter use; (2) support local farmer's markets; (3) join a food co-op or buying club (not Sam's Club) or shop at a natural foods store or bakery that offers organically grown and/or regional products; (4) become a share-member in a community-support agriculture farm by making a season-long commitment to a local grower; and (5) cook the majority of your meals from scratch, eating lower on the food chain (i.e., less meat), or when you eat out, support locally owned, nonchain restaurants, especially ones that buy some local and/or organic produce.

Superstores vs. Main Street: Another critical consumer decision each household must make is how much to patronize shopping malls vs. downtown shopping districts. My wife and I recently moved to Cedar Falls, Iowa, where she is pastoring the local Mennonite church. We live on Main Street, a few blocks from the revitalized downtown, and in recent weeks I've purchased sneakers at Miller's Shoe Store, a basketball at Iowa Sports Supply, coffee beans at the local Ten Thousand Villages, a new bike at the pawn shop, repairs for an old one at Bike Tech, supper at an Italian restaurant, local produce at the weekly farmer's market, and had my radio repaired and my car worked on, all within walking distance of my home. In most of these interactions I got to know the actual proprietor or manager of the business and had an extended conversation. I could have gone to the strip mall out by the highway and obtained nearly all these goods and services at cheap rates with "one-stop shopping" at a Wal-Mart superstore. Each of us must decide whether the next generation's quality of life will be richer with communities dominated by strip malls and corporate superstores or with Main Street and independently owned local businesses.

Socially conscious investment: Finally, a more just and sustainable community economy will only come about via socially conscious investment, whether on the part of households or institutions (including church and parachurch organizations). For me this means (1) investing money only in community-minded and regionally based companies whose labor, environmental, safety, production and marketing practices (and end product) you can ethically support; (2) refusing to turn your economic decisions over to money managers who may not be responsible to communitarian values in their pursuit of profits on Wall Street; (3) supporting alternative trade organizations—like Ten Thousand Villages—that engage in fair trade when purchasing international products; (4) placing your savings in credit unions and community banks, not national megabanks; (5) lending money to friends, family, neighbors and especially the poor at low interest rates, if you find you have surplus; and (6) giving your money away (to worthwhile causes), being downwardly mobile, living simply.

In Greek, economics ("oikonomos") means "household management." A shalom-filled community economy will be built upon the foundation of many just, well-organized and entrepreneurial household economies. Trillion-dollar federal debts, gross national products, International Monetary Funds, the World Wide Web, electronic stocks and transnational corporations may seem to undermine even the possibility of a relevant household or community economy today. But don't be fooled by the propagandists and "experts" of globalization. These are enemies of community, nature, the Spirit and the church. Communitarianism must guide our stewardship of resources in the 21st century if we wish to experience the kingdom that is like a mustard seed or yeast—small in scale yet powerfully redemptive. In the words of Wendell Berry, "Love God and practice resurrection."

Kent Davis Sensenig lives in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Putting communitarianism into practice

1. Grow a backyard garden (organically).
2. Cook your own meals and preserve produce for the winter.
3. Buy your food from local, sustainable sources. Support value-adding industries.
4. Take your business to local-to-regional, independent and small- to mid-sized stores.
5. Refuse to shop at national chains and conglomerates.
6. Place your savings in credit unions and community banks, not national financial corporations.
7. Provide most of your own entertainment and fellowship within your circle of family, friends, neighbors and co-religionists.
8. Use public transportation and human-powered energy (bikes, walking) as much as possible.
9. Plant trees.
10. Honor the Sabbath.
11. Practice spiritual disciplines.
12. Become a member of a local church.

Hannah and the Good Shepherd

by Andrea Schrock Wenger

Carolyn Prieb

Hannah Joseph, 12, was lost one day. Turns out she was just slumped in a chair in the doctor's waiting room in Whitesburg, Ky., doing as her grandmother had instructed. But somehow the dozens of people looking for her had missed her. It was probably the longest hour and a half in Hannah's mother's life.

Hannah's grandmother, Shirley Breeding, had dropped Hannah at Food City to pick up a magazine. She was to then walk the short distance from the grocery store to the Mountain Comprehensive Health Care facility to wait while Shirley had an appointment. By the time Hannah got to the office, Shirley was already in with the doctor, so she settled in with her magazine. But Shirley somehow missed seeing her when she came out of the office.

A stroll through the Mountain Comp facilities, then the grocery store, the parking areas and again back in the doctor's office yielded no sign of Hannah. Paging her over the intercom system in both buildings yielded nothing.

People began to worry. Shirley called Jackie, Hannah's mother. Soon health-care staff, grocery clerks, patients awaiting appointments and other shoppers were in on the search.

"Where is Hannah?"

As worry grew, tears began to flow. Police stopped traffic, questioned drivers, peered under seats and into trunks. An unidentified man stopped Mennonite Central Committee U.S. worker Shari Iverson, in an MCC van, to question her as to the identity of the child with her, her daughter Erin, age 7.

In this small town, it didn't take long for word to spread and panic to set in. Of course it turned out to be unnecessary panic. Eventually a patient at the health-care facility saw Hannah on the floor, reading her magazine. "Are you Hannah Joseph?" she asked. "Did you know everyone is looking for you?" Hannah had no idea.

Reunited with her mother, grandmother and countless friends and strangers, Hannah realized the enormity of what had happened. Held in her mother's arms, the little girl burst into tears.

I couldn't help thinking of the parable of the lost sheep when I heard about Hannah's experience. Jesus says that God loves us as a shepherd loves his sheep. And even if 99 sheep come into the fold at night, the shepherd will not rest till the 100th sheep is found.

I remember hearing that story as a child sitting on small mint-green benches in a basement Sunday school room at Kingview Mennonite Church in Scottdale, Pa. I can still picture the curriculum's handout for the day—a shepherd in a flowing white robe, wind and rain buffeting him as he shielded his eyes, scanning the horizon for his lost sheep. And finally the joy at finding the little lamb. It made an impression on me then. I liked sheep because our neighbors had some. They were precious.

But Hannah's story makes a bigger impression on me than that parable. Perhaps it's because I'm a mother now. I get choked up thinking about how Hannah's mother must have felt in those minutes of wondering. I feel the enormity of a mother's love for her children. And I think anew about God's love for me. If God loves us like a mother or father loves a child, then I know that it is a fierce love.

And I think about the broader community that joined in the search for Hannah. Without thought, they left work responsibilities, a place in the checkout line or a doctor's appointment to join the search. When it was over, a patient approached one of Jackie's friends. "I need a hug," he said, embracing her. "I don't even know this girl, but I just have to have a hug."

Hannah didn't ask for people to look for her. Hannah didn't even know she was lost. But strangers and kin saw nothing more important in that moment than finding her.

I find comfort, knowing that God loves me in much the same way. Even when I don't ask for God's love. Even when I don't realize that I am lost. Even when I feel I couldn't deserve God's love. That is when God loves me most, unconditionally, without reason. And God rejoices when I connect anew with him, when I am found.

Hannah didn't ask for people to look for her. Hannah didn't even know she was lost. But strangers and kin saw nothing more important in that moment than finding her.

Andrea Schrock Wenger, with Delbert, her husband, is program co-coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in Kentucky. They live in Whitesburg with their children, Eliott and Leah.

The complexion of evangelism in China

Fascination with children yields chance to share faith

GCMC

Rod and Kathi Suderman and their children (top to bottom): Jesse, Stefanie and Christopher.

BEIJING—Whenever Rod and Kathi Suderman and their children go out to a public place, such as a park, they inevitably draw a crowd. And the center of attention are their two sons and daughter.

The Sudermans, working under the auspices of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, are in China coordinating the work of China Educational Exchange. The Chinese love children, and they are drawn to the light-haired, fair-skinned Suderman youngsters: Christopher, 9, Stefanie, 5, and Jesse, almost 3. They are usually besieged for photos.

But the Chinese fascination with blond children has also led the adult Sudermans to an unexpected opportunity to share something of their faith with a wide audience in a country where Christianity is regulated and even discouraged as undesirable.

Call it blond evangelism.

It all started when the Sudermans were invited to a Christmas party last year. "Of course, during the evening, there were lots of photos taken of us and the kids," Kathi says. "Everyone wanted pictures with the little blond kids.

"Some time later, the man happened to show some of the photos to a friend who hosts a Chinese TV show on parenting. ... When she saw the pictures, she was intrigued and wanted to interview us."

The woman came to the Sudermans' apartment in Beijing with her dentist husband, whose English was better. But the Sudermans were able to communicate in Chinese.

"We thought at first, 'Oh, they want to put some foreigners on the show to attract attention and ratings,' but we quickly saw there was an actual topic here," Kathi says. "They spent about five hours with us on a Saturday: filmed us riding bikes, playing and having a meal together. Then there was a separate time set aside for the host to interview us."

She wanted to know about the Sudermans' goals for their children and what parenting methods they used to achieve them. "It became a good opportunity for us to share our faith, because everything they asked about was related to that," Kathi says.

Adds Rod, "It's impossible to talk about goals for your kids without giving reasons for them.

"Some of our goals for our children are for them to learn about God and to learn to live with other people in the world because that's our responsibility as Christians."

Kathi says she and Rod weren't intentionally trying to share their faith to the broadcasters. "But it just naturally came up through the questions the host asked," she says.

The Sudermans, originally from Aberdeen, Sask., don't know when the half-hour show will be broadcast or what it will contain.

China Educational Exchange, a North American inter-Mennonite program, places workers in Chinese schools to teach English and support local Christians however possible. *—Melanie Zuercher for GCMC, MBM and CEE news services*

Bookstore helps cover conference

Having only one paid employee reduces the overhead at Book ReViews, a used-book store in North Newton, Kan. That means more money for Western District Conference.

Since it was started 10 years ago, Book ReViews has contributed $33,900 to the conference after expenses. In addition to the one paid employee, who works part-time, the store has 26 volunteers.*—Bethel College Mennonite Church NewsLetter*

MEDA joins war against mosquitoes and malaria

WINNIPEG—In Africa, where mosquito-born malaria claims more than 2.5 million lives annually, mosquito nets may not be enough.

If people roll against a net in their sleep, mosquitoes can bite skin through the mesh. One growing answer is mosquito nets treated with insecticide. The biodegradable chemical is safe for humans but lethal to bugs that touch down on a freshly treated net.

As part of efforts to expand distribution of the treated nets, the International Development Research Centre has awarded a contract to Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) to research use of the nets and of net retreatment kits in Congo, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. One or two of these countries will then be chosen for further work.

MEDA specializes in business-oriented assistance to the poor. The agency's preliminary research indicates that there is enough unused textile capacity in Africa to boost production for increased demand for insecticide-treated netting. There also seems to be enough competition to keep prices low as the industry grows.*—MEDA News Service*

U.K.'s only Mennonite church welcomes strangers as Kosovar refugees flood London neighborhoods

LONDON—The United Kingdom's only Mennonite congregation is reaching out to the thousands of Kosovar refugees pouring into London, offering aid, comfort and help with a new language. In turn, the congregation has experienced the rejuvenating power inherent in sharing the good news of hope and healing.

During the past six months, an estimated 20,000 Kosovar refugees have arrived in north London, including the neighborhood of Wood Green Mennonite Church. The 20-member congregation in February chose to alter its budget so that it could devote 40 percent of its outside giving to a new project providing hospitality, safe haven, food, clothing and instruction in colloquial English.

The project has brought life and a new view of the refugees to members of the church, says Tim Foley, Wood Green pastoral team member.

"The refugees are amazing," he says. "They are a warm and content people, even though they have nothing. We love being with them. They are very open and friendly; they sometimes find us cold and closed."

Despite the stereotype of British reserve, relationships are being built, and the numbers of refugees coming to Wood Green's weekly gathering and English lessons are increasing. The main goal of the English lessons is to build a vocabulary for refugees attempting to use the British social services system.

"It is really colloquial English that the refugees need to survive," Foley says. "For example, local doctors were refusing to treat refugees because they could not explain their symptoms. We spend a lot of time on body parts and illnesses to overcome this problem."

Nine church members have volunteered to work regularly with volunteers from the Salvation Army and with a Southern Baptist missionary family located in the area. The volunteers are using the notorious London tabloids as teaching aids because of their use of common English. Foley is quick to point out, however, that the content is heavily edited by teachers.

Some of the volunteers have met with local government officials to enlist their assistance with the refugees. Foley says they are making progress in areas such as completing government forms. He has also worked with banking officials to help refugees obtain bank accounts, without which they cannot get jobs.

Wood Green has been assisted through a partnership with Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., which has sent $500 for Wood Green's refugee assistance efforts.

Foley says that although it would be fine if the predominantly Muslim refugees expressed an interest in Christianity, it is not the primary goal of the congregation's work.

"I hope this will allow us to express our faith," he says, "allow us to practice the key work of welcoming the stranger … give us confidence that we can be God's co-workers, that there is more to peacemaking than protesting."

—Christy Risser for MBM News Service

MBM photo by Tom Price

Maddy Lewis-Smith serves tea to Mary (center) and Mark Thiessen Nation, Mennonite Board of Missions workers in London, following morning worship at Wood Green Mennonite Church. The London congregation is reaching out to thousands of Kosovar refugees who have arrived in the area.

Refugee family gets Virginia help

The Kosovar refugee crisis has come to Harrisonburg, Va. And Lindale Mennonite Church is responding.

The six-member Rama family arrived in Harrisonburg June 6 via Macedonia and Fort Dix, N.J. To give the family a new start, Lindale members found an apartment and stocked it with furniture, appliances, clothing and food. Members have also helped the Ramas with shopping, job searches and English lessons.—*Connections*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Topping it off

Jamila Witmer of Lancaster, Pa., (right), wearing a Somalian outfit, helps Dora Cadet of Philadelphia with her Djiboutian headpiece during Eastern Mennonite Missions Festival of Culture, held July 10 at Lancaster Mennonite High School. The festival, featuring food, activities and displays from 19 international locations, was part of EMM's Festival of Mission July 9-11. The Festival of Mission included mission messages, an original drama and the commissioning of 56 long-term and 34 summer youth workers.

MCC-inspired agency serves Nigerian women

JOS, Nigeria—Diana sells "kunu," a local grain drink, by the road. Her husband is unemployed, so her profits support the family. Weary after a day of selling, she still walks several miles to attend courses sponsored by Movement for Christian Community Service of Nigeria (MCCSN), only missing class if she or one of her four children is ill.

The classes, Diana says, taught her not only to read and write but also "how to pray, how to disciple my children and how to live in harmony with my husband." Her children are healthier, and she is better able to aid women giving birth at home. Lessons in basic math have helped her business.

When Nigerians John and Martha Adive retired from their work in literacy, they searched and prayed for a way to continue to use their skills to meet needs right where they live. The Adives had related with Mennonite Central committee workers and said they came to respect "MCC's quiet but committed service in the name of Christ."

At the same time, Nigerians who had helped advise MCC on its work were considering creating a partner Christian service organization, closely connected to MCC and yet unique in its own programs. The Adives were invited to develop the organization, and MCCSN was born 3½ years ago.

The Adives toured MCC work sites in Nigeria to understand the agency's principles and operations. They also visited MCC programs in North America and participated in a new worker orientation.

Back in Nigeria, the Adives determined that their organization's first focus would be women. "Women here form the backbone of the church," Martha says, yet they struggle due to lack of education and resources.

Now with five full-time staff members and supported by a start-up grant from MCC, MCCSN offers literacy classes, income-generation training and Bible study. Martha has written a literacy textbook integrating lessons in Christianity.

The women come faithfully. Many say their relationships with husbands and family improved as they learned communication skills. They are proud they can help their children with school assignments. Some have successfully started small businesses, learned basic accounting and business skills and repaid small loans granted to them.—*Brenda Hartman-Souder for MCC News Service*

Skateboarders new church focus

Joel Rempel and a few of his friends needed a place to skateboard in Steinbach, Man. Because most other places in town didn't want them, they ended up at the large parking lot of Steinbach Mennonite Church, Rempel's congregation.

Three years later, that has evolved into a new congregational ministry. Partnering with Youth for Christ, Rempel, 19, has been hired by his congregation to work full-time with the skateboarders and bicyclists who still use the parking lot.

Rempel's appointment came after neighbors started complaining about noise, loitering and littering. This summer, however, the problems have disappeared.

Rempel, a student at Providence Bible College in Otterburne, Man., sees his role "as meeting the kids where they're at, being available to build relationships with them and share Christ." —*Canadian Mennonite*

When she goes back to school
will she have a pencil and paper?

Help MCC check off our 1999 "back-to-school" request list:

- ☑ **Honduras**—18,050 school kits
- ☑ **Iraq**—14,244 school kits
- ☑ **Haiti**—4,641 school kits
- ☐ **Jordan**—14,000 school kits
- ☐ **Liberia**—7,000 school kits
- ☐ **Haiti**—4,375 school kits
- ☐ **Ukraine**—3,500 school kits

Make a school kit:
4 spiral-bound or padded notebooks, 70-80 pages each (8 1/2″ x 11″)
4 unsharpened #2 pencils
1 ruler, flexible plastic (30cm and 12″ markings)
1 large pink pencil eraser
1 box of 16-27 crayons or 12-20 colored pencils
Place items in an 11″ x 16″ double drawstring bag. Contact your nearest MCC office for locations of school kit collection centers.

Mennonite Central Committee ®

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SWAP participant killed in hiking accident

HARLAN, Ky.—A Pennsylvania teenager serving with his youth group in a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) program in Kentucky died July 14 during a visit to a nearby nature preserve.

Jonathon A. Miller Jr., 18, had climbed to the peak of a waterfall, about eight stories high, when he apparently slipped and fell. His youth group, from Hollowell Brethren in Christ Church of Greencastle, Pa., had been spending the week in southeast Kentucky serving with MCC's Sharing With Appalachian People, helping with emergency housing repairs for local residents.

The Hollowell group and a group from Millport Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa., were hiking through the nature preserve when the accident occurred.

The Hollowell group stayed an extra day to finish Miller's roofing project as a tribute to him.—*MCC News Service*

Seniors organization gets new director

SOUDERTON, Pa.—Helen Longenecker Lapp of Souderton has been named the new executive director for Mennonite Association of Retired Persons (MARP). She succeeds founding director Barbara K. Reber, who stepped down after 10 years.

With Lapp's appointment, MARP's office will move from Elkhart, Ind., to Souderton.

MARP encourages senior church members to serve at home and while traveling. "Lifetime faith commitments of elderly Mennonites will deepen as they continue to model reconciliation, mutual support and the giving of time and talents," Lapp says, "and as they lovingly hand on this tradition to younger members of our church."

Longtime service worker named to MCC position

AKRON, Pa.—Edgar Metzler became director of international programs for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) on Aug. 1, succeeding Ray Brubacher, who has taken a position with Mennonite World Conference in France.

In a joint MCC-Mennonite Board of Missions assignment, Metzler spent the last nine years in Nepal as executive director of United Mission to Nepal. Previous MCC work included short-term assignments in Asia, and stints as Peace Section executive secretary and interim director of the MCC U.S. Washington Office. Metzler has also served as secretary for Peace and Justice Concerns of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and has been a pastor in Kitchener, Ont.—*MCC News Service*

Mennonite Brethren vote to end binational body

WICHITA, Kan.—The century-old binational General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches will be split into separate U.S. and Canadian structures as a result of delegate action at the conference's biennial convention last month in Wichita. Seventy-six percent of delegates approved the change.

"The trend is toward regionalization and decentralization," said moderator Ed Boschman. "The move is away from the church serving the denomination to the denomination serving the church."

Also at the convention, 90 percent of delegates supported a resolution reaffirming women to serve in all areas of ministry except the lead pastorate.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Seminary launches preaching institute

HARRISONBURG, Va.—To help pastors improve their preaching skills, Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg has started the Preaching Institute. Working with area church conferences, the institute will offer seminars throughout the eastern United States. Instructors will provide analysis of videotaped sermons and will train lay listeners within congregations to give systematic responses.

by the way ...

Of the 3,900 credentialed church workers in the ministerial database of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 374 are women, or less than 9.6 percent.—*Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries*

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Events

Eastern Civilian Public Service reunion, Aug. 18-19, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa. Contact: Irvin E. Cordell, 717-328-2746.

Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church centennial celebration, Aug. 20-22. Contact: 541-926-1443.

Welsh Mountain Home and Welsh Mennonite Church centennial celebration, New Holland, Pa., Aug. 20-22. Contact: 717-355-9522.

"Transforming Congregations" workshop on interim pastor training, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, Mennonite Conference Center, Franconia, Pa. Sponsored by Atlantic Coast, Eastern District and Franconia conferences. Contact: James Lapp, 888-723-5513.

Workers

Bean, Heather, has begun a pastorate at Peace Mennonite Fellowship, Fontana, Calif.

Birkey, Marlin, on July 15 concluded a pastorate at Aurora (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Buller, Paul, has begun a pastorate at Disciples Mennonite Church, Duluth, Minn.

Cotton, Richard, has begun a pastorate at Swiss Mennonite Church, Alsen, N.D.

Friesen, Ivan and Rachel, on July 11 began a pastorate at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Good, Anita and Marlin, Goshen, Ind., are beginning three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) terms in Honduras as country representatives.

Haarer, Randall, has begun a pastorate at Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Hart, Larry, on June 27 concluded a pastorate at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Heyerly, John, has begun a pastorate at Meadows (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Keim, Ray, has begun a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

Metzler, Edgar, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as MCC director of international programs.

Ruth-Heffelbower, Clare Ann and Duane, Fresno, Calif., are beginning 2½-year MCC assignments in Indonesia, Clare Ann as country representative and Duane as facilitator of a university peace center.

Searls, David and Jennifer, have begun a pastorate at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Smucker, Stan and Marlene, on Aug. 1 retired from a pastorate at Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Waldowski, Dave, on July 18 concluded a pastorate at Good Shepherd Community Church, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Weaver, Alain Epp and Sonia, are beginning five-year MCC assignments in Jerusalem as country representatives.

Births

Almendinger, Andrew William, June 29, to Christian and Renee Almendinger, Berlinville, Pa.

Beale, Garrison Paul, May 9, to Cindy (Thorp) and Shawn Beale, Streetsboro, Ohio.

Bechler, Brett David, July 1, to Brenda and Dave Bechler, Harrisonburg, Va.

Boardwine, Hunter Michael, May 23, to Joe and Melissa (Staples) Boardwine, Mantua, Ohio.

Buckwalter, Ezra James, July 3, to Matthew and Norene (King) Buckwalter, Lancaster, Pa.

Burckhart, Luke Philip, June 23, 1999, received for adoption June 24 by Joanne (Zook) and Phil Burckhart, Buhler, Kan.

Bylsma, Isaac James, July 13, to Dan and Janice (Oaks) Bylsma, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Carlisle, Steven Paul Wesley, June 30, to Scott and Shannon (McLaughlin) Carlisle, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Carpenter, Carolyn Reid, July 13, to Rand and Selena (McCoy) Carpenter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Goertzen, Abigail Elise, June 23, to David and Rebecca (Voss) Goertzen, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Halteman, Nicole Yelena, June 10, 1998, received for adoption, June 9, 1999, by Gary and Joanne (Yost) Halteman, Newville, Pa.

Haynes, Sarah Rose, July 11, to Jeff and Sandra (Stubblefield) Haynes, Hooversville, Pa.

Hege, Alissa, June 23, to Christine (Gehl) and Jon Hege, Quirnback, Germany.

Kennell, Alissa Lynn, July 12, to Brad and Kelly (Eigsti) Kennell, Washington, Ill.

Konopinski, Lucas William, July 15, to Andrea (Liestman) and Rob Konopinski, South Bend, Ind.

Magill, Liam Jacob, July 13, to Ingrid (Kopp) and Renny Magill, Lancaster, Pa.

Miller, Talia Elizabeth, June 14, to Emily and Maynard Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Nester, Douglas Phillip, June 27, to Darryl and Lori (Miller) Nester, Bluffton, Ohio.

Peters, Bailey Elizabeth, July 21, to Jeff and Tami (Goertzen) Peters, Henderson, Neb.

Peterson, Tyler Luke, July 2, to Sally (Butcher) and Troy Peterson, Wichita, Kan.

Rhodes, Preston Lee, June 28, to Cindy (Yoder) and Josh Rhodes, McVeytown, Pa.

Rufenacht, John Michael, July 17, to Craig and Mary (Borntrager) Rufenacht, Archbold, Ohio.

Rush, Kolby Keith, July 8, to Keith and Krista (Keim) Rush, Hatfield, Pa.

Saal, Anna Christine, July 13, to Laura (Sommers) and Troy Saal, Tremont, Ill.

Sauder, Elizabeth Ann, July 18, to Dan and Esmerelda Avina Sauder, Wauseon, Ohio.

Schmidt, Shelby Lynn, July 4, to Durango and Stephennie (Seirer) Schmidt, Buhler, Kan.

Schrag, Gabrielle Faith, June 4, to Gordon and Leann (Keys) Schrag, Littleton, Colo.

Sell, Brooke Nikole, July 12, to Deb (Witmer) and Kent Sell, Bird in Hand, Pa.

Siltman, Shelby Paige, July 7, to Erika (Martin) and Jeff Siltman, Minier, Ill.

Troyer, Tanner Lewis, July 1, to Jeanette (Lehman) and Steve Troyer, Chambersburg, Pa.

Wagler, Samuel Phillip, July 12, to Heidi (Bernau) and Russell Wagler, Crawfordsville, Iowa.

Yoder, Brockton Michael, July 5, to Rickardo and Shali (Buxton) Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Yoder, Hayden Jesse, July 16, to Kendra (Mathias) and Terry Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Yoder, Jeremiah Jacob Frey, July 12, to Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Albrecht/McKenzie: Starla Albrecht, Caaseville, Mich., and Kevin McKenzie, Pigeon, Mich., June 26.

Bailey/Schrock: Mike Bailey, Glendale, and Deanna Schrock, Phoenix, July 17 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Barth/Glasshoff: Heather Barth, Beaver Crossing, Neb., and Drew Glasshoff, Waco, Neb., June 19 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Birch/Shetler: Jessica Birch, Kalona, Iowa, and Jim Shetler, Kalona, July 10 at Kalona.

Birky/Wisted: Aaron Birky, Hopedale, Ill., and Staci Wisted, McLean, Ill., July 17 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Bliss/Sellberg: Brian Bliss, Council Bluff, Iowa, and Kari Sellberg, Harrisonville, Mo., June 19 at Harrisonville Mennonite Church.

Brenneman/Frickey: Todd Brenneman, Grantsville, Md., and Chelsea Frickey, Grantsville, May 29 at Glade Mennonite Church, Accident, Md.

Bucher/Rice: Neil Bucher, Eyota, Minn., and Jennifer Rice, Peoria, Ariz., June 26 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Donaldson/Springer: Jennie Donaldson, Morton, Ill., and Ed Springer, Tremont, Ill., July 17 at Community United Church of Christ, Morton.

Eash/Scott: Rachel Eash, Newton, Kan., and Peter Scott, Scottdale, Pa., June 19 at Bethel College Chapel, North Newton, Kan.

Eberly/Nissley: Matthew Eberly, Madison, Wis., and Kathy Nissley, Madison, June 26 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Elzinga/Young: Marna Beth Elzinga, Lambertville, Mich., and Eric Young, Collinsville, Ill., July 10 at Toledo (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Emerson/Leman: Lonnie Emerson, Eureka, Ill., and Joan Leman, Eureka, June 12 at First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.

Estell/Geithmann: John Estell, Toledo, Ohio, and Melinda Geithmann, Toledo, July 17 at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Ottawa, Ohio.

Fairfield/Glick: Joshua Fairfield, Bridgewater, Va., and Christine Glick, Harrisonburg, Va., June 26 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Fisher/Stutzman: Mark Fisher, Washington, Iowa, and Joni Stutzman, Washington, June 4 at Washington Mennonite Church.

Frye/Mumaw: Brian Frye, Stillwater, Okla., and Heidi Mumaw, Dalton, Ohio, July 3 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Gidley/Leatherman: Graig Gidley, Frankenmuth, Mich., and Jennifer Leatherman, Doylestown, Pa., June 18 at Chalfont, Pa.

Gingerich/Holsopple: (Aaron) Chan Gingerich, Sarasota, Fla., and Kelly Holsopple, Harrisonburg, Va., July 17 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Hathaway/Nestleroth: Eric Hathaway, Souderton, Pa., and Carolyn Nestleroth, Manheim, Pa., June 20 at Manheim.

Hershey/Koehne: David Hershey, Bridgewater, Vt., and Kris Koehne, Charlton, N.Y., June 19 at Essex, N.Y.

Jeffries/Pennington: Barbara Jeffries, Phoenix, and Tony Pennington, Glendale, Ariz., July 10 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Kaufmann/Thomsen: David Kaufmann, McPherson, Kan., and Sarah Thomsen, Bluffton, Ohio, June 12 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Kindy/Steiner: Barbie Kindy, Wooster, Ohio, and Rex Steiner, Apple Creek, Ohio, July 17 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Knepp/Miller: Trenton Knepp, Sarasota, Fla., and Rachel Miller, Washington, Iowa, June 12 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Krueger/Wiebe: Jennie Krueger, Leamington, Ont., and Colin Wiebe, Port Rowan, Ont., July 10 at North Leamington United Mennonite Church.

Liambounheuang/Stempel: Thiphake Sone Liambounheuang, Harrisonburg, Va., and Michael Stempel, Harrisonburg, July 18 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Masek/Schweitzer: Jerome Masek, Ceresco, Neb., and Carisa Schweitzer, Henderson, Neb., May 8 at St. Peters Church, Lincoln, Neb.

Miller/Schrock: Sam Miller, Arthur, Ill., and Lisa Schrock, Sullivan, Ill., July 18, Arthur Mennonite Church.

Miller/Short: Melissa Miller, Archbold, Ohio, and Aaron Short, Archbold, July 10 at St. Martins Lutheran Church, Archbold.

Mohr/Teeters: Marlene Mohr, Elkhart, Ind., and Mike Teeters, Elkhart, June 19 at Elkhart.

Otto/Yutzy: Wilmer Otto, Lovington, Ill., and Martha Yutzy, Arthur, Ill., July 18.

Rossman/Schloneger: Rebecca Rossman, Cincinnati, and Matt Schloneger, Cincinnati, July 10 at Old St. George Church, Cincinnati.

Rusack/Swartz: Kevin Rusack, Elms Springs, Ark., and Maria Swartz, Harrisonville, Mo., June 5 at Harrisonville Mennonite Church.

Summers/Wyse: Brian Summers, Elkhart, Ind., and Brenda Wyse, Elkhart, July 3 at Elkhart.

Deaths

Bittenbender, Russell, 71, Bossardsville, Pa., died July 17. Spouse: Mary Bauman Grube Bittenbender. Parents: Floyd and Susan Angelmeyer Bittenbender (deceased). Other survivors: children Floyd, Ronald, Daniel, William Grube, Cynthia Raub; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: July 21 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Crockett, Edward, 73, Morton, Ill., died June 14, Spouse: Jo Sue Melton Crockett. Parents: Albert and Dixie Crockett (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Kurt; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 19 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Gross, Elizabeth Histand, 98, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 4. Spouse: James Gross (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Susan Histand (deceased). Survivors: children Grace Hockman, Jewell Brenneman, Hazel Whitehead; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 8 at Mount Jackson, Va.

Harshburger, David, 90, McVeytown, Pa., died July 18. Parents: Joshua and Sarah Harshburger (deceased). Funeral: July 21 at Mattawana (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Herr, Elizabeth, 94, Lancaster, Pa., died June 3. Spouse: Walter Herr (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Barbara Huber Herr (deceased). Funeral: June 7 at Oreville Chapel, Lancaster.

Hess, Elsie Weaver, 79, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 14 of pneumonia. Spouse: John Hess Sr. Parents: Levi and Martha Weaver (deceased). Other survivors: children Tina Glanzer, Bruce; three grandchildren. Memorial service: July 19 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg and July 21 at New Holland (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Eva, 91, Belleville, Pa., died July 2. Spouse: Ezra Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Catherine Spicher Peachey (deceased). Survivors: children Thomas, Marian Byler, Irene Shrock; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Kreider, David, 33, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 4 of injuries from a fire. Spouse: Marcia Good Kreider. Parents: Norman and Dorothy Kreider. Other survivors: children Lana, Gabriel, Kailyn. Memorial: July 8 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Lehman, Wilfred, 81, West Liberty, Ohio, died July 15. Spouse: Ruth Plank Lehman (deceased). Parents: Joel and Martha Basinger Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce, Beth Miller, Sharon Kendall; six grandchildren. Funeral: July 19 at West Liberty.

Litwiller, Ada Ramseyer, 99, Goshen, Ind., died July 11. Spouse: Nelson Litwiller (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Magdalena Gingerich Ramseyer (deceased). Survivors: children Lois Buckwalter, Beulah Gonzalez, Eunice Miller, Esther Schertz; 16 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 13 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Miller, George Stuart, 32, New York, died July 5 in a drowning accident. Parents: Quinten and Dolores Miller. Funeral: July 8 at Kalona (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Pauls, Eva, 93, Inman, Kan., died July 15. Parents: Henry and Sara Doerksen Pauls (deceased). Funeral: July 17 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman.

Ressler, Edna, 75, York, Pa., died June 24. Spouse: Maynard Ressler. Parents: Abram and Mary Riehl Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Wilma Wood, Wanda Turner, Twila, Everett, Dale, Lawrence, Wilbur; 18 grandchildren; six foster grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Stony Brook Mennonite Church, York.

Roth, Ruth, 72, Benson, Ill., died June 17. Parents: John and Alma Yoder Roth (deceased). Funeral: June 21 at First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.

Sommer, Ralph, 83, Bluffton, Ohio, died July 5. Spouse: Frances Miller Sommer. Parents: Phillip and Viola Hilty Sommer (deceased). Other survivors: children Jonathan, Phillip, Mark, Becki Ahmed; seven grandchildren. Memorial service: July 31 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Stauffer, Richard, 78, East Earl, Pa., died May 9 of cancer. Spouse: Ruth Yoder Stauffer. Parents: Martin and Anna Stauffer Zeiset (deceased). Other survivors: children Julia Witmer, Sanford, Lowell, Ellen Gunning, Grace DeWald, Loretta Esh, Esther Wenger, David; 18 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 12 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Stutzman, Evelyn Mast, 87, Millersburg, Ohio, died July 8. Spouse: Roman Stutzman. Parents: Albert and Elizabeth Mast (deceased). Other survivors: children Joan Kandel, Ward, Dale, Sharon Mullet, Carol Miller; 18 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 12 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Toews, Anna Penner, 86, Steinbach, Man., died July 1. Spouse: Erdman Toews. Funeral: July 4 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Unruh, Eli, 75, Lakewood, Colo., died July 21 of a stroke. Spouse: Marjorie Holdeman Unruh. Parents: David and Anna Jantz Unruh (deceased). Other survivors: children Janet Stutzman, Douglas, Donice Manos, Lowell; eight grandchildren; one stepgrandchild. Funeral: July 24 at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood.

Wiens, Milton, 74, Inman, Kan., died July 17. Spouse: Erma Jane Regehr Wiens. Parents: Jacob and Katie Siemens Wiens (deceased). Other survivors: children Jay, Kenneth, Loren; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Yoder, Dorothy, 56, Sarasota, Fla., died June 18 of cancer. Spouse: David Yoder. Parents: Abe and Katie Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Brenda James, Cynthia Schrock; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Yoder, Elizabeth Kanagy, 89, Allensville, Pa., died July 7. Spouse: Irvin Yoder (deceased). Parents: Jonathan and Mary Yoder Kanagy (deceased). Survivors: children George, Kathleen Lin, six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 10 at Allensville Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Yoder, Katie, 89, Kalona, Iowa, died July 19 of heart failure. Funeral: July 22 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Yoder, Stanley J., 60, Boalsburg, Pa., died June 14. Parents: Moses (deceased) and Katie Yoder. Other survivors: children Phillip, Julie; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 17 at St. Pauls United Methodist Church, State College, Pa.

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classifieds

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- **Hesston Pharmacy** seeks full-time staff ***pharmacist*** to provide retail and nursing home services. Excellent schools, friendly central Kansas community. Competitive salary/benefits. Contact Bev at 316-327-2211; evenings 316-327-4560.

- **Landis Homes** is seeking a part-time (32 hours/week) ***associate chaplain*** to work closely with those in health care. Credentialing for ministry is preferred. Apply at Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has openings for full-time positions in middle school ***science/math*** and ***history/language arts*** for the fall.

  Send resume to Gary G. Sensenig, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011.

- **Akron Mennonite Church**, Akron, Pa., a multistaffed congregation, seeks ***senior pastor*** with strong biblical, theological and human relations training from an Anabaptist perspective. M.Div. degree preferred.

  Send resume to Jerry Shank, 531 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522; email jeshank@redrose.net

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following position for the 1999-2000 school year: ***science/biology/ word-processing teacher*** (75 percent).

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***Harrisburg Discipleship Center director***. Full-time, 3-year term beginning December 1999. Experience in youth ministry, discipleship and cross-cultural mission a plus.

  Contact Keith Blank, EMM, P.O. Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538 by Sept. 15.

- **Join Spruce Lake Retreat** camp & conference ministry team in the secluded and breathtaking Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pa. as an ***accountant/accounting manager*** and become part of a loving community of believers making a kingdom difference in the hearts of over 20,000 guests a year. The applicant will have a strong faith in Christ, a heart for ministry and have a degree in accounting or have 5 yrs experience in accrual (GAAP) accounting.

  Please send inquiries to Armin Adams, director of business services, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; fax 570-595-0328; email armin.adams@juno.com (no attachments) or retreat@enter.net (with attachments)

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president of clinical services***, a new position providing administrative supervision and guidance to various departments including Health Services. Qualifications include a college degree in health administration or related management field. Supervisory experience in long-term care preferred. Nursing Home Administrator license helpful.

  Submit resume to Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; or call 717-581-3936.

- **Schubert Mennonite Church**, a small, growing, rural community church, eastern Pa., seeks ***assistant/lead pastor***. Up to half-time support. Inquire: Marlin Zimmerman, 708 E. Linden St., Richland, PA 17087-9714; 717-866-5323; email zimmb@ptd.net

- **Prairie View Inc.**, a church-related, regional behavioral health system based in Newton, Kan., is seeking a ***nurse executive***. This management position will be responsible for staff, programs and program development for a 60-bed unit including inpatient, partial and residential services. Minimum master's nursing degree, leadership and management experience, and CNS in psych/mental health field helpful. Competitive salary and benefits.

  Submit resume to Yvonne Sieber, vice president, Physical & Human Resources, P.O. Box 467, Newton, KS 67114; 800-362-0180; fax 316-284-6491. EOE

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a nonprofit Christian organization providing vital income to artisans in developing countries, wishes to ***expand its volunteer base*** at its Akron, Pa., warehouse and stores in Ephrata, Pa., and Montreat, N.C. Individuals or groups for a day or weeklong commitments are needed. Also needed are short-term volunteers (3-4 months). Housing and food allowance are provided for short-termers.

  Contact Sherrie Ober, 717-859-8117; email smo@villages-mcc.org

- **Messiah College**, a Christian college of the liberal and applied arts and sciences, seeks applicants for two full-time, term-tenure-track positions to begin fall 2000 in the management and business department. Primary teaching responsibilities are in the ***human resources*** and ***marketing*** areas. Potential exists for administrative oversight of the department and/or Center for Leadership Development. Qualifications include support of and commitment to the identity and mission of Messiah College, and a Ph.D. in appropriate discipline. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until appointments are made.

  Send letter of application and resume to Terry Earhart, chair of Department of Management and Business, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027; 717-766-2511, ext. 7047.

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by Gordon Houser

Open the catalogs you get in the mail, and among them I'll bet you'll find something for sale with the label "Celtic." Celtic music, jewelry and books are popular. Celtic practice, however, is not.

The Celts were people who settled primarily in what is now Ireland, Scotland and Wales in the early centuries of the Christian Era. Celtic Christianity also developed in this area. Since these pockets of believers were largely unaffected by Roman occupation, writes Robert Parham in "Celtic Chic" (*Faith and Works*, July/August), "their faith expressions look less like the Christianity of Western Europe and more like the Eastern churches—less structured, more mystical."

While we may have heard of St. Patrick, most of us know little about Celtic Christianity. The tradition lacks a systematic theology; much of its character has been passed down in poetry and stories.

Parham outlines five characteristics of Celtic Christianity: simplicity, holism, mystery, immanence and environment. Many people find these traits attractive. For example, a recent study found that 81 percent of baby boomers want a simpler life.

Like much in our culture, "Celtic" is treated simplistically and commercially. It connects with certain New Age expressions, and its Christian character is lost. As is its depth.

In a two-part article, "Celtic Schmeltic," in *Spirituality* (November/December 1998 and January/February 1999), Gilbert Márkus critiques a couple of recent books (*Anam Chara* by John O'Donohue and *The Celtic Way* by Ian Bradley) that treat Celtic Christianity as a "romantic myth" that bears little resemblance to what Celtic Christians actually believed. It's the old myth of the noble savage.

For a more reliable treatment of Celtic Christianity, try *The Celtic Way of Prayer* by Esther de Waal (Doubleday, 1997). She not only explicates Celtic practice but applies it to her life—and thus to our own. She writes: "To pray the Celtic way means above all to be aware of this rhythm of dark and light. The dark and the light are themselves symbols of the Celtic refusal to deny darkness, pain, suffering and yet to exult in rejoicing, celebration in the fullness and goodness of life."

Another helpful resource just out is *A Contemporary Celtic Prayer Book* by William John Fitzgerald (ACTA Publications, 1999).

Fasting from media

by Ted Lewis

Give me only daily bread. Otherwise I may be too full and deny you.—Proverbs 30:8,9

Consuming too much media—like watching TV for hours—gives me the same feeling I get from eating too much food at Christmastime. At times I have cleansed my system after the holidays; increasingly I am applying the practice of fasting to the media.

TV and radio news, for example, do not settle well with me. The daily buffet of crime stories, accidents and scandals is enough to give anyone indigestion. Commercial news offers a mythology of disorder: a narrative of perpetual tension with no resolution. Bits of information are cut off from ethical comment and stories of response.

Seeking a closer information-action ratio, I have largely limited my news to *The Mennonite* and *Mennonite Weekly Review*. When I read about Kosovo or Littleton in articles including moral perspective and hope-filled engagement, I find that I can be more "response-able" for what I know. It's more like eating daily bread.

Thomas Merton wrote about the media's "sin of noise." To gain interior silence, where God can be found, we need to have a measure of exterior silence. While his suggestion to throw out TVs and radios may seem extreme, the virtue of detachment is relevant to us all.

Fasting from "entertainment news" may involve a long-term choice, yet there is wisdom also in short-term fasting from wholesome sources of news. The bottom line is how our intake influences our ties with God. Proverbs 30:8,9 reminds us that being "too full" hinders our spirituality. Media fasting invites us to cleanse ourselves of noise and image toxicity in order to heighten our spiritual faculties.

Ted Lewis lives in Pawnee Rock, Kan.

books

Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith **by Anne Lamott (Pantheon, 1999) is a hilarious, moving account of coming to and growing in the Christian faith. Lamott uses a self-deprecating style and well-crafted stories to probe depths of faith lessons she has learned. Her language may offend some readers. Lamott is unique. What other writer says her sinful thoughts would "make Jesus want to drink gin straight out of the cat dish"?**

films

Amid the extravagant special effects and exaggerated plots of summer movies is *The Winslow Boy* (G), a literate film by David Mamet based on a real incident in Victorian England.

The Blair Witch Project **(R) is the sleeper hit of the year. It has the look and feel of a documentary (but it's fiction). It's scary without any monsters or special effects, but it also addresses larger themes, like being lost in the world. Original.**

art

"Through Cuban Eyes," a collection of paintings probing the culture and faith of the people in Cuba, is on display at the Mennonite Heritage Center Gallery in Winnipeg for 13 weeks this summer. The grand opening of this exhibit by 17 artists from Cuba took place June 25.

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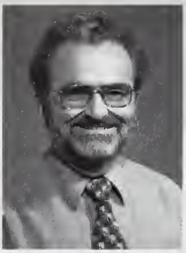

J. Lorne Peachey

The grand experiment (1)

What must it feel like to be God?

When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?—Luke 18:8

Who of us hasn't wondered why God allows so much evil in our world? Who hasn't thought about how we would change things were we able to fill the divine role for a season? But have any of us thought about what it might feel like to be God and look on as we humans conduct our lives in this world?

Philip Yancey wonders those thoughts in a well-crafted book, *Disappointment With God* (Zondervan, 1992). He says we get the first glimpse of how God must feel in the creation story. God makes humans in the divine image, imagining close fellowship with us. But for this companionship to be genuine, God goes one step further and also gives us the part of the divine image that allows for freedom. We are free to make choices, to do as we please.

What a great risk this was—and continues to be. The grand experiment in freedom could go awry. God must surely watch us humans with his fingers crossed, hoping against hope we will choose for good and right. Imagine the pain God must feel when we choose darkness and sin. Imagine too the celestial joy when the path we choose, in our freedom, is one of peace, love and light. The Bible outlines this well in the stories of the prodigal son, the lost sheep and the lost coin.

Faith matters. One person's choosing to believe in God and act as though God exists is the most important choice in the universe. And God has strong feelings about that.

Yancey says we also see just how much God has at stake in this experiment in the book of Job. Traditionally we have interpreted this book as dealing with suffering and evil. Yancey challenges us instead to see it as a glimpse of what's happening in another world, where God defends his creation and responds to the taunts of Satan.

"Of course, humans will decide for you when things go well," Satan tells God in Job 1-2. "But take away all those things that define who they are, all that means the world to them, and they won't decide for you. God, you are manipulating humans to be your companions by being kind to them. There is no such thing as human freedom."

So, difficult as it may be to comprehend, God allows Satan to have his way with Job. It's a difficult time, both for Job and for God, as the former experiences disaster after illness after calamity, and the latter agonizes about what the outcome will be for Job's faith.

God continues to wonder. Today God could step in and right those things we feel are so wrong. But to do so would take away our freedom, to insist on a path that we may or may not choose. Instead, God longs for us to choose faith, even as we experience suffering and evil, much of it of our own making.

What we learn from the book of Job, Yancey says, is that faith matters, that one person's choosing to believe in God and to act as though God exists is the most important choice in the universe—a choice that does make a difference.

This choice for Job, in the midst of the most terrible of circumstances, has the Bible proclaiming him an example of righteousness(see Ezekiel 14:14,20). He is that example because he proved Satan wrong about God's great experiment.

The same can be true for us today, Yancey says. "Our choices matter, not just to us and our own destiny but, amazingly, to God himself and the universe he rules."

Jesus tells us how important faith is to God when talking with the 70 disciples after they returned from preaching, healing and spreading the good news in Luke 18. The real question God has, Jesus told these disciples, is this: "When the Son of Man returns, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8).

God asks the same question today. The grand experiment continues. Will we, in the freedom we so much cherish, choose for God? Or will our personal agendas and our strong feelings of how things should be have us ignore God and choose for ourselves?

Those are not questions to be taken lightly. God has strong feelings about them.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

August 24, 1999

hand-knit or off the rack?

Lessons of grace from a special-needs child
page 4

6 Pharaoh's daughter
8 MCC aid spans Balkan ethnic divisions
9 Vietnamese gather for fourth conference
16 What does it mean to live by faith?

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

St. Louis sentiments

I could not believe it. The constitution of the General Conference Mennonite Church declares the "divine inspiration and infallibility of the Bible as the Word of God and the only trustworthy guide of faith and life." But the GC U.S. delegates at St. Louis 99 could not reaffirm the biblical teaching that "sexual relations are reserved for a man and woman in marriage." Did we really put our own agenda before the Word of God?

The General Conference Mennonite Church was organized in 1860 with the stated purpose that "all branches of the Mennonite denomination in North America, regardless of minor differences, should extend to each other the hand of fellowship." But we could not reassure either our sisters and brothers in the Mennonite Church or ourselves that we stand together on the common ground of common faith understandings. A seismic shift happened, and a huge amount of common ground was lost. Did we really place our own agenda before the church's unity in Jesus Christ?

The GC U.S. delegates could not even gather a simple majority in favor of what was essentially a restatement of paragraph three of Article 19 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. We are told that people had many reasons for voting against the resolution when they were actually in favor of what it said. But what about Article 20 of the confession of faith? What about truth-telling? What about Matthew 5:37? Did we really place our own agenda before the truth?

For generations, the General Conference Mennonite Church has rejoiced in various versions of the saying: "In essentials unity. In incidentals freedom. In all things love." I have been told that we don't need strong boundaries in the General Conference Mennonite Church because we have a strong core of beliefs. But we voted against an essential core statement of faith. Did we really place our own agenda before our essential beliefs?

We are asked as congregations to participate in "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church: A Study Guide for Mennonite Congregations and Organizations." But with a vote defeating a resolution on a basic faith teaching, it looks like we have already said a large part of what our vision for the new Mennonite Church USA will be. Did we really place our own agenda before the future of the church?

I couldn't believe it. I still can't.—*Steve Estes, Chenoa, Ill.*

So we voted at St. Louis to create one denomination in two countries. Separation always hurts. I trust no Canadians voted to be separated from the Americans and no Americans voted to be rid of the Canadians. After the vote, Heinz Janzen, former General Conference Mennonite Church general secretary, said to me, "Henry, your dream of 30 years has now been fulfilled." I didn't jump for joy. I was still depressed. My dream 30 years ago was to have similar U.S. and Canadian conferences for home ministries and the General Conference Mennonite Church for international ministries and fellowship.

However, this vote will be good for both the United States and Canada. Now we have reached a new era, a more mature understanding of building God's kingdom through Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada. At the same time, we know that we are not out of the woods. We trust our leadership will show us the way. They need our prayers.

It was unfortunate that the St. Louis 99 U.S. sessions had to end on a sad note. It seems to me that the homosexuality resolution during the dying hours of the convention should have been called out of order by the moderators and parliamentarian. In substance, our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective says what the joint body's position is on homosexuality. We cannot allow a single member's resolution, no matter what the outcome of the vote, to derail the position we have unitedly accepted after several years of painstaking, prayerful work. I wish the Mennonite Church USA leadership much wisdom in resolving the issue. They need the prayers of all.—*Henry J. Gerbrandt, Winnipeg*

At the close of the last morning business session at St. Louis 99, I was feeling very low. We seemed not only unwilling to trust each other, we weren't even listening to each other. Real integration seemed a very long way away. That feeling persisted into the evening.

Then at the evening worship, we sang, "If you believe and I believe and we together pray, the Holy Spirit must come down and set God's people free." God said to me, "If you people will trust each other enough to agree that all of you really do believe in Jesus Christ, even though you may not agree on everything about what that means, and if you will pray together and ask, my Spirit will lead you so that you can accept each other, support each other and love each other."

theMennonite

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readers say

Jesus promised that his Spirit will guide us into all the truth, but perhaps the greatest truth will turn out to be showing us how to be one even as we have different understandings of some things which seem very basic to us. That evening God gave me new hope for Mennonite Church USA.—*Robert L. Ramseyer, Bluffton, Ohio*

Ervin Stutzman, St. Louis 99 Listening Committee member and Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect, said, "We have voted our deepest fears": fears that the church is deviating from Scripture and fears that the church will become heavy-handed and authoritarian ("U.S. Delegates Delay Membership Decision," Aug. 10). In this statement, showing a capacity to listen attentively to differing (and Christly) concerns within our beloved denominations, I am heartened. May such attentive regard for one another—and for that of Christ, who speaks to us from the other side—be on the increase among our congregations.—*John Stahl-Wert, Pittsburgh*

Praise the Lord! We are now a larger church family. We have had and always will have some diversity and differences on some issues. But we mostly agree on the basics. To God be the glory. —*Etril J. Leinbach, Goshen, Ind.*

I was so proud to be a friend of Mennonites when I heard the July 28 National Public Radio segment on the convention in St. Louis and the discussion of "we're Mennonites, and we're working on conflict resolution." And the congregational singing—not a choir but the whole congregation—nearly moved me to tears. Keep up the good work; our society needs more Mennonites.—*Mary M. Gieseler, Memphis, Tenn.*

Cover photo of clothes by Marilyn Nolt; photo of sheep uncredited.

Hand-knit

How a mother with a special-needs child moved from lament to praise for God's grace

by Ruth Preston Schilk

I have been called an "exceptional parent," not because I have received trophies or accolades for my parenting skills but because I have an "exceptional" child. His name is Isaac.

Isaac is an amazing 5-year-old who has a warm smile, flashy running shoes and wispy blond hair. He could be the best and, if need be, the only greeter at nearly any social function. He gladly makes the rounds at church, takes people by the hand—both those he recognizes and those new to him—looks them in the face and makes them look at him. He is glad to see them and assumes they feel the same way about him. If he sees someone walking behind us, he insists on stopping and waiting for them to catch up. Other children especially excite Isaac, and he often tries to get as close as possible to them, like a centimeter from their face. This type of behavior, as well as his awkward gait, his unawareness of his ironlike grip and lack of speech, tend to spook other kids.

Isaac has what I had often assumed only happens to other parents' children: an unidentified genetic syndrome that causes developmental delays. I struggle between telling Isaac's story and letting Isaac be his own story. New situations, in which people encounter Isaac for the first time, feel awkward for me. I want to blurt out, "This is Isaac, and this is why he is the way he is." I am learning to take my cues from Isaac, who frequently makes his way into a new gathering like he's always belonged. His comfort level was most evident one time when Harold, my husband, took Isaac with him into a donut store. Before Harold knew it, Isaac was up at the counter putting his hand into the hand of a biker.

Isaac needs help with dressing, eating, his toilet, bathing, making choices. I need help having more patience, feeling more comfortable meeting people, initiating conversation and being less independent and more intimate. Which of us has special needs?

I rejoice in many things about Isaac—his friendliness, his ability to forgive, his love for everyone. Yet I feel sad and worry about him, too:

- The older he gets, the behinder he becomes.
- Will other kids and adults take advantage of him?
- Will he learn to communicate more effectively?

Isaac needs help with dressing, eating, his toilet needs, bathing, making choices. I need help having more patience, feeling more comfortable meeting people, initiating conversation and being less independent and more intimate. Who of us has special needs?

I grieve for me and my family, too:

- My notion of family recreation has had to be modified. Hiking together is not a realistic option. Going to the theater or cinema as a family is also out of the question, given Isaac's short attention span.
- Isaac's condition necessitates our spending large amounts of time doing things with him and for him. We struggle to be fair to his older sister, Tannis, who points out that we often spend more time with Isaac than with her and that people tend to make a fuss over him and not over her.

Mad at God: I also get mad at God. How can any parent of a child with special needs read Psalm 139:13-15 and believe that God has any integrity?

> "For it was you who formed my inward parts;
> you knit me together in my mother's womb.
> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
> Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.
> My frame was not hidden from you,
> when I was being made in secret,
> intricately woven in the depths of the earth."

If God is such a great knitter, what happened with Isaac? Did God drop a stitch? Use the wrong pattern? I am not an accomplished knitter, but I grew up on a 400-head sheep farm, where I had ample opportunity to feel a sheep's fleece, both while it was worn and after it was shorn. The fibers are at once strong and soft; the fleece is thick, yet each strand of wool is fine. Until a fleece is washed, the lanolin retained in it makes the wool virtually waterproof. Spinners sometimes came to

r off the rack

our farm wanting to buy a fleece to card and spin into skeins of yarn for knitting. One woman was wearing a sweater from wool she had spun and knit herself and claimed that she had not washed the fleece or even the sweater. Bits of straw and chaff were evident among the stitches.

Isaac is a hand-knit wool sweater—uniquely made in a beautiful, unusual pattern; bulky yet soft, warm and serviceably waterproof because the wool hasn't been washed. Consequently there are some imperfections, if one looks hard enough for them—slivers of straw, bits of burr; he might even smell like sheep. But I prize this Isaac/sweater more than any standard, "flawless," factory-made garment available off the rack. Even the particular smell is important, since a sheep knows its young by its smell.

Blessed: Garrison Keillor, who tells about life in the fictitious town of Lake Wobegon, Minn., once told about someone who felt he could not share with anyone his enthusiasm about how wonderful things are now because he hadn't been able to tell how bad things had been in the first place. I've told you some of my pain so that I can tell you now how good things are because of the grace I have received from Isaac being a part of my life. I have been blessed when a woman in my former congregation told me she almost cried when she saw him walk for the first time in church. I almost cried when Isaac, who liked to travel from pew to pew during the service, was scooped up one Sunday and cuddled by a person I love as my own grandfather. In the congregation we attend someone offered to sit near us and take Isaac out to the nursery during the service if he got restless, allowing Harold and me to get something out of the service.

I can't say I'd want to repeat the experience of having another "hand-knit sweater" like Isaac, but I sure wouldn't trade him for anyone or anything else, nor would I want to give up the profound experiences of God's grace that being Isaac's parent has brought me.

Ruth Preston Schilk lives in Lethbridge, Alta. This article is adapted from a meditation she gave during a chapel service at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., on Nov. 24, 1997.

I can't say I'd want to repeat the experience of having another "hand-knit sweater" like Isaac, but I sure wouldn't trade him for anyone or anything else, nor would I want to give up the profound experiences of God's grace that being Isaac's parent has brought me.

A psalm of praise

Praise the Lord! It's a boy!
His name shall be called Isaac—he laughs—
for we hope that he will make people happy.
O Lord, why is he not thriving?
Why does he not want to nurse
or open his eyes or smile?
His tears and mine mingle
as we cry out to you, God.
I cry for answers, and you give me silence.
Isaac cries for nourishment and takes none.
Show yourself, my God of comfort and vision.
The difference between the child of my dreams and
the child that I have is so great.
Are you somewhere in that gap too, Lord?
Yet you cause my friends to comfort me,
to inquire regularly about Isaac and the rest of us.
You prompt people to risk hearing a pained response.
You lead us to gentle and understanding doctors and
bring us into the company of delightful and loving therapists.
God of love, you make me consider what it means to be made in your image
and that "God don't make no junk."
You cause Isaac to smile, then to laugh, to be his name,
to crawl and then to stand.
You lift me from despair and set my hope on you.
Praise the Lord!—*Ruth Preston Schilk*

Pharaoh's daughter

A new look at a familiar Bible story

by Kathleen Kern

I can still visualize the illustration accompanying the Sunday school story of Moses in the bulrushes that I heard when I was 7 or 8. It depicted Pharaoh's daughter, dressed in white and wearing lots of makeup and jewelry, exclaiming over the dear little baby floating in the basket, while all her handmaidens clustered around. The lesson left me with the impression of Pharaoh's daughter as a flibbertigibbet who adopted the baby on a whim, and then, not knowing what to do with it, handed it over to a Hebrew woman, whom she never suspected of being Moses' mother.

I have begun rethinking Pharaoh's daughter in the last year and now believe that Sunday school lesson's image of her was wrong. She was probably a lot browner, for one thing. More importantly, I no longer think she was a silly young woman who adopted a baby in a flight of fancy.

Exodus 1:22 notes that Pharaoh told "all his people" that they had the responsibility of throwing male Hebrew babies into the Nile. The princess must have known what her father had ordered.

The resistance of Shifrah and Puah, the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1:15-20, is often cited as a biblical example of nonviolent resistance to a domination system. Pharaoh's daughter, who appears six verses later, was part of that system. What does the Exodus narrative say about her? She comes down to the Nile River to take a bath. She sees a basket in the reeds and sends one of her servants to pull it out of the water. She opens the basket and sees the baby and pities him.

The key to understanding Pharaoh's daughter comes in the next sentence when she says, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children." How did she know? Was it because the baby's skin was a little bit lighter than her own? Or was it because she knew that a mother would hide a baby in reeds by the riverbank—not the safest place to leave a baby, after all—only if the mother knew her baby would be killed otherwise? Exodus 1:22 notes that Pharaoh told "all his people" that they had the responsibility of throwing male Hebrew babies into the Nile. The princess must have known what her father had ordered.

Couldn't let him die: And if she had known, maybe the Sunday school story should go something like this: "After the princess heard that her father ordered the slaughter of thousands of infants, she was appalled but didn't know what to do. One day she went down to the river to take a bath and found one of those babies floating in a basket. Before, she had thought only that her father's proclamation was horrific because she didn't really know any Hebrews. But now, when she actually saw the baby and held him in her arms, she knew she couldn't let him die. Maybe she couldn't save all the babies, but she could save this one.

From *The Good News Bible*

"She looked up and saw a little girl with wide eyes watching her and her servants. Was the girl a Hebrew, too? The people at court were always talking about how dirty and lazy and smelly the Hebrews were, but the girl and the baby didn't look so different from other people. Perhaps she was a sister or cousin of some sort. The girl approached, hesitantly, and asked if the princess would like her to get a Hebrew woman to nurse the child. Probably the child's mother—it would be a wonderful thing if she could both save the child and return him to his mother.

"But how would she keep the child safe from Egyptian paramilitaries? 'Sure,' they would say, when they saw the Hebrew woman nursing the baby. 'Sure, that's the Princess' son.' She had to think of a way to let people know that she had adopted him. So when the child's mother approached, she announced in front of her servants and anyone else listening that she was hiring the woman to nurse her son.

"She handed the baby over a little reluctantly to the mother. He was a sweet little boy. Maybe when he got older, she could bring him to the palace and see that he got a good education. He might be able to help his people better that way."

The picture I imagine going with the story shows the princess handing the baby over to the mother (or having one of her servants do so). Everyone looks frightened. The mother is frightened to be in the presence of royalty—and the daughter of the man who wanted her baby drowned, at that. The princess is wondering about whether one of her servants might snitch on her to her father. Might her father

Those who vote for socially progressive candidates and make donations to the poor but who also buy cheap clothing and fruits and vegetables from all over the world—aren't they part of the system that dictates that it is acceptable for some people to live in poverty so that a minority lives in comfort?

order her executed for doing this? The servants are afraid that Pharaoh might punish them for not telling him that the princess has saved one of the Hebrew boys.

The last thing the princess says in the story also tells us something important about her: She named him Moses, "because," she says, "I drew him out of the water." Recall that in Exodus 2:5, the princess orders one of her servants to take the child out of the water. The princess remains a part of a social order that lets the aristocracy claim credit for the labor of the lower classes. (How many Pharaohs spoke about how they "built" the pyramids?) There is no record that the princess did anything after that to defy a system based on exploitation and contempt for an ethnic group. And there is no record that she didn't.

Privileged individuals: I've been thinking about Pharaoh's daughter in the last few months in the context of people who live with varying degrees of comfort as part of a ruling power structure. Human rights and peace activists sometimes write off those who serve in the military, in politics or in large corporations as faceless, nameless supporters of "the system." Yet sometimes these people in power allow their consciences to dictate their actions. Often it happens when they put a face on the people their class is oppressing. The refugees they meet, the film about teenagers working in a sweatshop, the photograph of a child covered in napalm wailing in anguish—these make it impossible for privileged individuals to view oppression in the abstract. So they follow their consciences, but they remain within the system because they are either unwilling to give up their privileges and comfort or because they simply can't envision another way of life.

Activists for social justice may criticize such people, but isn't everyone who benefits from the economic system in North America a Pharaoh's daughter? Those who vote for socially progressive candidates and make donations to the poor but who also buy cheap clothing and fruits and vegetables from all over the world—aren't they part of the system that dictates that it is acceptable for some people to live in poverty so that a minority lives in comfort?

Maybe rescuing Moses was the first and only thing that Pharaoh's daughter did to fight the system of domination of which she was a part. The question is, Was or wasn't that enough?

Kathleen Kern lives in Webster, N.Y.

Revival

by Linea Reimer Geiser

Koslovsky is his last name
I can't remember his first
what I remember is
his tenor voice
floating above
the sawdust haze
of the old town tabernacle

he's from across the Red River
the one in Manitoba
not Texas (so we sang
just remember the Red River Valley
and thought it meant us
no valley, just prairie)

he sings about seeking
knows in his bones
about fleeing, looking for refuge,
his parents part
of the group who left
Russia after the revolution
battered the Mennonite villages
of the Ukraine

when he sings
even the children stop playing
grandparents hold their breath
to inhale the words
if with all your hearts
ye truly seek me
ye shall surely ever find

so I find God
in the midst of revival mentality
rocking the community each spring

and fifty years later
recall that voice soaring
sense much that is lost
much that is found

Linea Reimer Geiser is a poet in Goshen, Ind.

Photo by David Hiebert
for illustration only

MCC aid spans Balkans' ethnic divisions

Rival Albanians, Serbs both victims of Kosovo violence

AKRON, Pa.—Despite his tender age, Antic Bozidar knows that his life is not what it used to be.

When the 3-year-old Serb recently received a bag of school supplies from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the first thing he did was open the box of pencils and start drawing in one of the notebooks.

"He is drawing animals for our home," says his grandfather, also called Antic Bozidar, wiping tears from his eyes. "He knows we are not there now. He cries through the night, saying, 'Grandfather, we don't have any place anymore.' "

Until July, the Bozidars had lived on a farm in Kosovo. Now they live in a former resort hidden in the trees of Avala Park, a tree-covered mountain outside Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia. Atrocities suffered at the hands of Serbian authorities originally forced the Kosovo Albanians from their homes to neighboring Albania and Macedonia. But as the refugees start returning, Kosovo Serbs, such as the Bozidar family, have fled because they feared retribution. Like the ethnic Albanians, the departing Serbs left much behind.

"We lived in the house for more than 30 years," says grandfather Bozidar.

The Bozidars' current residence is filled with mattresses covering the floor, with barely enough room to walk between them. Yet as far as their government is concerned, these refugees do not exist, says Jasmina Tosic, co-director of Bread of Life, MCC's partner in Yugoslavia, which has distributed 4,200 school kits in the region.

But MCC's assistance does not respect the ethnic divisions that have long spawned violence in the Balkans. While some Kosovo Albanians have returned home, spawning the fears by the Bozidars and others for their safety, many refugees remain elsewhere. For example, of one village of 3,000, only three families have returned. Some are still in camps, but most are living with Albanian families in and around the capital city of Tirana. MCC has sent more than 11,000 refugee kits to Albania, plus another 24,000 to Kosovo and Serbia.

"It was obvious that the people who put them together were thinking about what a family might need when they were run out of their homes," says Cori Crawford of the Albanian Evangelical Alliance, one of MCC's partners in the region.

"Albanian refugees travel in family groups; you don't have many individuals," she says. "So you have families in North America preparing the buckets for families here, and there were a lot of personal touches with a note inside."

In addition to the school and refugee kits, MCC has also sent nearly 15,000 comforters to the Balkans.The agency has six workers in the region, two each in Albania, Bosnia and Croatia.
—MCC News Service

MCC photos by Mark Beach

Above: Three-year-old Antic Bozidar, with his grandfather, examines the pencils that came in a Mennonite Central Committee school kit. The Serb family fled their home in Kosovo because they feared attacks by Kosovo Albanians. Right: The bucket of an MCC refugee kit makes a good seat for Qeivdrim Rraci, accompanied by his mother, Nezaheit, both Kosovo Albanian refugees still in Tirana, Albania, and waiting to return to Kosovo. MCC has sent 35,000 refugee kits and 4,200 school kits to the region.

Bruce Moyer

Pennsylvania church bags MCC kit crisis

More than 300 health and school kits sit at the front of the sanctuary of Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church on July 25, dedicated to be sent to Mennonite Central Committee. Congregation members filled the kits in response to MCC's depleted inventory, caused in large part by the demand for kits caused by the Kosovo crisis.

Tanzanians reaffirm church practices

Two graduates of U.S. schools selected as new bishops

MUSOMA, Tanzania—The leadership of the Tanzania Mennonite Church has clarified and reaffirmed the church's positions on baptism, speaking in tongues, polygamy and foot washing.

One hundred fifteen deacons, pastors and bishops gathered June 24-26 in Musoma amid disagreements of church practices. "The meetings began without harmony," said longtime bishop Joram Mbeba. "But the Lord intervened, and we came to one mind."

Among the decisions reached by the assembly were:

- The normal mode of baptism will be pouring, but immersion will be offered for those who request it.
- Speaking in tongues will be permitted in small groups and occasionally in larger public gatherings in accordance with 1 Corinthians 14.
- The church's historic stance on polygamy will continue: Members shall be monogamous, and coverted polygamists shall leave all but their first wives. But the church needs to assure adequate care for the former wives and children of converted polygamists.
- Foot washing will be optional, but the spirit of foot washing shall prevail.

The assembly, looking to fill four bishop positions, selected two nominees but delayed action on the other two openings. Joseph Nyakyema and Christopher Ndege, both former students at U.S. schools, received more than the 75 percent of the votes needed. But the votes nearly evenly split among four candidates for the two remaining positions, and the assembly counseled waiting.

"A normal, healthy birth takes nine months from conception to delivery," said moderator Salmon Butenge. "You should never rush the day of delivery. Likewise, let us not hurry the selection process."

Nykema, a graduate of Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., is a son of one of the first Mennonites in Tanzania. His father was baptized in the 1930s.

Ndege is the oldest son of a polygamous father. He was converted at age 13 and for years was the only Christian in his family. About 10 years ago, Ndege's parents were also converted, and his father left his other two wives, although he continued to provide for them. Ndege studied at Rosedale Bible Institute in Irwin, Ohio, and graduated from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg.

The gathering's teaching sessions included presentations by bishop Daud Mahemba; David W. Shenk, Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Lithuania; and Donald Jacobs, former executive director of Mennonite Christian Leadership Foundation, Landisville, Pa.

The 39,000-member Tanzania Mennonite Church, or Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania, emerged out of Eastern Mennonite Missions efforts starting in 1934.—*EMM and MWC news services*

> **The meetings began without harmony. But the Lord intervened, and we came to one mind.**
>
> *—Joran Mbeba*

Vietnamese hold fourth North American meeting

PHILADELPHIA—Vietnamese Mennonites from across North America gathered July 30-Aug. 1 in Philadelphia for reports of their congregations' activities, stories of God's work in their midst and encouragement for faithful living.

About 15 delegates from six congregations attended the conference, hosted by Philadelphia's Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship. But other sessions drew 40 to 70 people, and Sunday morning worship was attended by 250.

Conference participants came from Fairfax, Va.; Souderton, Pa.; Calgary; Edmonton and Winnipeg. Congregations in Clearbrook, B.C., Vancouver and Honolulu did not send delegates.

The North American Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship was formally organized two years ago. But this year's conference was the fourth since 1988. It featured reporting and brainstorming on outreach and growth, including plans for new congregations in Toronto and Vancouver. Several delegates told of meeting friends and family members in their homeland.

The keynote speaker was author John Drescher. Three of his books have been translated into Vietnamese for congregational use.

While Lan Chau of Winnipeg looks on, Lisa Pham of Fairfax, Va., speaks during the North American Vietnamese Mennonite Conference July 30-Aug. 1 in Philadelphia. The conference drew participants from six congregations from the United States and Canada.

For retiring Ministerial Leadership Services head, leaving job doesn't mean leaving church issues

Esau

NEWTON, Kan.—John Esau says he's not retiring from one job—he's retiring to another.

On Aug. 31, he will leave his position as director of Ministerial Leadership Services for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), where he has served since 1985.

"There are new ways of talking about retirement these days," says Esau, who is not yet 65. "I want to find ways to continue to be involved with the issues of the church."

One way will be by continuing his columns for *Mennonite Weekly Review,* which he has been writing for 12 years. Faith & Life Press earlier this year released a book with 100 of Esau's columns.

Leaving a job, however, involves some looking back. Esau points to several accomplishments and issues as highlights of the past 15 years. One was the development of a unified polity for the calling and credentialing of pastors that would serve both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. That resulted in the publication of "A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership" in 1996.

Another highlight was creating salary guidelines for GC pastors, which led to the recognition of a growing gap between the GC guidelines and those of the Mennonite Church.

Probably the most difficult and complex project, Esau says, was the development of a new ministerial leadership database for the integrating church.

As for the issues that have marked Esau's tenure in the Ministerial Leadership Services office, he says, "Probably no single issue has dominated this era for pastoral ministry as have the issues related to sexuality." At times, he says, cases of ministerial sexual abuse have been "a weekly agenda" for his office.

In addition have been the questions of homosexuality and church membership. "We ought to be aware that most other denominations have struggled with this issue, not over membership but around ministry credentials," Esau says. "It is probably only a matter of time until that issue emerges for us as well."

New opportunities that developed during Esau's tenure include the biennial Jerusalem Seminar; a special training seminar for pastors of large churches with multiple staff; and the Ministry Inquiry Program, a summer internship for young people interested in pastoral ministry.

Keith Harder will succeed Esau next month as director of Ministerial Leadership Services. Harder has been pastor of First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan., since 1986.
—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC News Service*

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Guatemalans relocate following threats

GUATEMALA CITY—A Guatemala City Mennonite family, active in peace and social justice activities, has moved and may join two sons already sent out of the country in the wake of threats against them.

Jose Luis Azurdia and Olga Piedrasanta de Azurdia, sons Jorge Luis and daughters Claudia and Maria Alejandra have been targeted several times since spring. On June 2, men in police cars, detectives and plainclothesmen entered their neighborhood and, among other actions, detained and interrogated Jorge Luis and Juan Carlos. Later that day, son Jorge Luis was returning from school when three unknown men intercepted him, blindfolded him, walked him to an unknown location and threatened his life if he revealed any information about anyone in the neighborhood. Earlier this year, one of his friends was kidnapped and disappeared.

On June 11, men knocked on the door of the family's home, but they had already moved. Three days later, police raided the neighboring home of a friend of the Azurdia sons and apprehended the head of the household.

Legal action is not possible because the threats have been anonymous. On the counsel of their congregation, Casa Horeb Mennonite Church, the sons have left the country for an undisclosed location, and the rest of the family—Jose Luis and Olga and two daughters—moved to a Mennonite Central Committee house in Guatemala City. They are also considering leaving the country.

Jose Luis and Olga are elders at Casa Horeb; he is also on the pastoral council, and she is the church treasurer and teaches Sunday school. Jose Luis is coordinator of the Central American Anabaptist Justice and Peace Institute Network and director of the Kikoten Christian Institute, where a Mennonite Central Committee worker is placed. Olga teaches at the Mennonite Bible Institute and at SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary, and is training coordinator of the Institute for Conflict Transformation and Peace Building at Rafael Landivar University.—*MWC News Service*

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'Camp meeting' offers leadership encouragement to Navajo women

CHINLE, Ariz.—Church participation isn't always easy for the women of Black Mountain Mennonite Church of Chinle, on the Navajo Reservation.

Even though encouraged to take public roles such as leading singing or teaching Sunday school, the women often express feelings of inadequacy. And at broader churchwide events, they can feel disconnected by their lack of English-speaking skills.

So on Aug. 14, the congregation held a women-only "camp meeting" in the Navajo language. Topics included self-image and how to be a leader in worship, Sunday school, prayer and the home. The event, open to women of Mennonite and other church affiliations, was supported by Pacific Southwest Mennonite Women.—*Panorama*

by the way ...

The first Mennonite settlement west of the Allegheny Mountains was in Fayette and Westmoreland in southwestern Pennsylvania, now the community of Scottdale, begun in 1789.—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*

MC staff member leaving job to enter pastorate

ELKHART, Ind.—After nearly 11 years of service, Miriam F. Book on Aug. 31 will leave her position as one of two associate general secretaries of the Mennonite Church. After a semester at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, she will join the pastoral staff at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., early next year.

Book served as Mennonite Church interim general secretary from 1995 to 1996 and was a coordinator of the MC and joint adult conventions through this year's activities at St. Louis.—*MC News Service*

Bethel College wins fund-raising award

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College, North Newton, has received the Circle of Excellence Award in Educational Fund Raising from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

Bethel last year raised $6 million in contributions, including a $2.5 million estate gift and a $1.4 million challenge grant.

Bethel was one of four private liberal arts colleges with less than 10,000 alumni to be honored. A panel of judges selected winners in 20 categories.

African schools could provide discernment forum

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia—The Mennonite Bible schools in Africa can provide assistance to the church in dealing with topics of concern, according to a plan recently drawn up at a meeting of school principals.

Participants at a June meeting in Addis Ababa felt that writers from the schools could address topics such as peace and reconciliation, divorce and remarriage, polygamy, homosexuality and abortion from a theological point of view. Then their findings could be circulated throughout the African church.

The meeting, held under the umbrella of the Africa Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Fellowship, drew school officials from Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.—*MWC News Service*

Young bidders help Ohio sale set new record

KIDRON, Ohio—The 34th annual Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale on Aug. 7 featured something new—an auction for children, allowing them to bid on toys, books, dolls and stuffed animals. The young buyers raised $1,700 to help set a new record of more than $250,000.

The sale of 219 quilts and wall hangings brought $108,000. One quilt was sold for $4,000, while another brought $3,750. Other high-dollar items included a tractor with mowing deck for $11,700, a Thomas Kinkade "Garden Beyond Spring Gate" print for $3,100; a clock for $2,100; and a rolltop desk for $1,750.

1998-99 record year for Hesston College giving

HESSTON, Kan.—Fueled by a capital campaign and the second-best year for contributions, Hesston (Kan.) College set a giving record of $4.5 million dollars in 1998-99. Giving to the annual fund topped the $1 million mark for the second consecutive year, while restricted gifts to the capital campaign reached nearly $3.4 million. Bequests added $75,000.

Pause for remembrance

Leona and Ralph Krehbiel of Pretty Prairie, Kan., examine the tombstone of her grandfather, Jacob Wedel, in the cemetery of Hopefield Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., Aug. 14 during a daylong commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the Swiss-Volhynian Mennonites' migration from Russia to Kansas and South Dakota. Of Swiss ethnicity, they eventually settled in the Russian province of Volhynia before immigrating to the United States. Hopefield was their first congregation in Kansas. The Swiss-Volhynians were part of a larger migration in 1874 when the first Mennonites and Hutterites left Russia for North America as a result of government plans to assimilate them into Russian society. They settled in Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba.

The Mennonite photo by Rich Preheim

Births

Baist, Olivia Rose, June 26, to Eric and Rhea (Roggie) Baist, San Francisco.
Buller, Kobe Dale, July 29, to Bradley and Kristi (Wieneke) Buller, Syracuse, Neb.
Forbes, Zoe Emmanuelle, June 4, to Bill and Heather Forbes, Pasadena, Calif.
Hackman, Hanna Joy and Heidi Lynne (twins), June 2, to Jeff and Rose (Nussbaum) Hackman, Salem, Ore.
Hange, Kristopher Tyedmers, July 21, to Maren (Tyedmers) and Roy Hange, Charlottesville, Va.
Hilty, Kathryn Louise, July 28, to Maryanne (Noris) and Mark Hilty, Barrington, R.I.
Hunsecker, Jordyn Paige, July 14, to Jeff and Kerry (Herr) Hunsecker, Manheim, Pa.
Jackson, Sarah Elizabeth, July 2, to Andy and Teresa (Smith) Jackson, Harrisonburg, Va.
Leuenberg, Jason Patrick, July 20, to Brian and Karla (Hohmann) Leuenberg, De Soto, Kan.
Miller, Caleb Isaiah, July 23, to Keith and Regina (Yoder) Miller, Millmont, Pa.
Nolt, Caleb Seth, July 25, to Julia (Miller) and Rich Nolt, Lititz, Pa.
Rolon, Aubriana, June 19, to Juan and Julie (McGuire) Rolon, Columbus, Ohio.
Sanders, Declan Roberts, June 13, to Jay and Julie (Roberts) Sanders, Pasadena, Calif.
Schlabaugh, Jared Kend, July 6, to Beth (Yoder) and Jim Schlabaugh, Wellman, Iowa.
Unzicker, Clara Lorraine, June 29, to Keith and Shannon (Musselman) Unzicker, Eureka, Ill.
Weaver, Austin Michael, July 31, to Erin (Steele) and Keith Weaver, Hopedale, Ill.

Marriages

Allen/Garlitz: Ryan Allen, Winchester, Va., and Sandra Garlitz, Winchester, July 17 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Alwine/Blough: Alycia Alwine, Hollsopple, Pa., and Timothy Blough, South Fork, Pa., July 17 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple.
Bartholomew/Schauer: Jody Lynne Bartholomew, Kimberton, Pa., and Timothy Lee Schauer, Glenmoore, Pa., July 1 at Glenmoore.
Bechtel/Ehst: Amanda Bechtel, Stroudsburg, Pa., and Ryan Ehst, Bally, Pa., June 19 at Christ Hamilton United Lutheran Church.
Bisbort/Heide: Scott Bisbort, Bally, Pa., and Gretchen Heide, Mount Holly, N.J., June 26 at First Presbyterian Church, Mount Holly.
Danehy/Lyndaker: Deborah Danehy, Canton, N.Y., and Jeffrey Lyndaker, Croghan, N.Y., June 12.
Deigert/Maust: Dana Deigert, Grantsville, Md., and Jamie Maust, Accident, Md., July 31 at Glade Mennonite Church, Accident.
Dick/Driscoll: Kathryn Dick, Bloomington, Ill., and Darin Driscoll, Phoenix, July 17 at Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill.
Hills/Hulburt: Mark Hills, Croghan, N.Y., and Nicole Hulburt, Croghan, July 9 at First Mennonite of New Bremen, N.Y.
Jantz/Litwiller: Lisa Valerie Mae Jantz, Goessel, Kan., and Joshua Phillip Litwiller, Hesston, Kan., July 17 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Keen/Scholes: Steven Keen, Newton, Kan., and Donna Scholes, Newton, July 31 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Kiser/Wampole: Amy Kiser, Harrisonburg, Va., and Mike Wampole, Green Lane, Pa., July 10 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Klompeen/Zabriskie: Kristin Joy Klompeen, Pasadena, Calif., and William Tyler Zabriskie, Los Angeles, June 26 at Pasadena.
Moore/Nirva: Jeremy Moore, Moundridge, Kan., and Nicky Nirva, Moundridge, June 12 at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Pauls/Wiens: Steve Pauls, Perryville, Ky., and Linda Wiens, Kansas City, Kan., June 5 at Parkview Mennonite Brethren Church, Hillsboro, Kan.
Peters/Young: Luke Peters, Henderson, Neb., and Chasie Young, York, Neb., July 20 at Thurman House Chapel, Branson, Mo.
Williams/Yoder: Patrick Williams, Steelton, Pa., and Janelle Yoder, Hollsopple, Pa., July 10 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple.

Expecting Surprises

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Deaths

Beck, Phyllis Wade, 62, Archbold, Ohio, died July 22. Spouse: Delmer Lee Beck. Parents: Bernard and Gladys Aumend Wade (deceased). Other survivors: children David, Deanna Rupp; five grandchildren. Funeral: July 25 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Folk, Lura Mae Ash, 100, Springs, Pa., died July 15. Spouse: Cleman Folk (deceased). Parents: Jonas and Alice Yoder Ash (deceased). Survivors: son Mark; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Memorial service: July 17 at Springs Mennonite Church.

Heatwole, Maude Brunk Good, 89, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 26. Spouse: (1st) Wade Good (deceased); (2nd) Roy Heatwole (deceased). Survivors: children Richard Good, Joan Osterhouse, Sue DeLeon; stepchildren Milton Heatwole, Glendon Heatwole, Mark Heatwole, Charlotte Burkholder; 10 grandchildren; 13 stepgrandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; 16 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: June 29 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Hostetler, Burton, 40, Kalona, Iowa, died July 5. Parents: Sanford and Lucy Hostetler. Funeral: July 8.

Ramer, Mildred Wagner, 90, Wakarusa, Ind., died July 16. Spouse: Clifford Ramer (deceased). Parents: William and Dora Ebersole Wagner (deceased). Survivors: children Rosemary Martin, Alpha Mae Mumaw, Nila Kauffman, Dale, Marilyn Miller, Dennis; 20 grandchildren; 45 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 19 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Rufenacht, Viola Short, 91, Wauseon, Ohio, died July 20. Spouse: Olen Rufenacht (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Mary Miller Short (deceased). Survivors: children Verle, Verlen, Mary Louise Lehman, Helen Hofstetter, Geneva; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: July 24 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Schmidt, Martha Almeda, 78, Inman Kan., died July 25. Spouse: Nick Schmidt. Parents: Martin and Mary Butz Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Steven, Mary Claycamp, Deborah Unruh, Becky Beebe; eight grandchildren. Memorial service: July 28 at Hebron Mennonite Church, Buhler, Kan.

Schrag, Frieda Graber, 88, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died July 26. Spouse: Erwin Schrag (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Frances Goering Graber (deceased). Survivors: children LaVerne, Erwin Jr., Vernon, Jolene Johnson, Norma Marshall; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 30 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

Siebert, Zachary James, infant, McCool Junction, Neb., died July 27 of an enlarged heart. Parents: Leo and Susan Siebert. Other survivor: sister Katelyn. Funeral: July 30 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.

Smith, Annie French, 83, Mifflintown, Pa., died July 25 of cancer. Spouse: Harry Smith. Parents: William and Ruth French (deceased). Other survivors: children Doris Peachey, Helen Peachey, Janet Zendt; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 28 at Mattawana, Pa.

classifieds

- **Hesston Pharmacy** seeks full-time staff ***pharmacist*** to provide retail and nursing home services. Excellent schools, friendly central Kansas community. Competitive salary/benefits. Contact Bev at 316-327-2211; evenings 316-327-4560.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** is seeking 1/3-time ***music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Sept. 1, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **MAMA Project** is seeking long-term (1-3 years) ***bilingual volunteers*** to be partners in community development, nutrition and home garden promotion in Honduras.

  If you are interested or would like more information, call Franconia Mennonite Conference Center, 215-723-5513, or email MAMA@MRN.org

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a ***one-year voluntary service assignment***. For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president of clinical services***, a new position providing administrative supervision and guidance to various departments including Health Services. Qualifications include a college degree in health administration or related management field. Supervisory experience in long-term care preferred. Nursing Home Administrator license helpful.

  Submit resume to Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; or call 717-581-3936.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA)** is seeking a ***Mennonite Foundation representative for the eastern region*** (Harleysville, Pa.). The Foundation provides planned giving support to an established donor constituency and charitable institutions. Qualifications for the position include the ability to understand and communicate financial and estate planning concepts, good presentation skills, willingness to obtain securities licensure and earn CFP or other professional designations, and a willingness to travel 25-30 percent. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

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by Gordon Houser

This column appears periodically as a way to pass on information to our readers about new books and other resources that may be helpful to us as we follow Jesus together. We also include our recommendations of books (right).

This Far by Faith (Augsburg Fortress, 1999, $12.50) is an African-American worship resource prepared by Lutherans.

Faith's Harvest: Mennonite Identity in Northwest Oklahoma by Sharon Hartin Iorio (University of Oklahoma Press, 1999, $27.95) chronicles the transition into mainstream America of German-speaking Mennonites who settled Oklahoma in 1893.

A Contemporary Celtic Prayer Book by William John Fitzgerald (ACTA Publications, 1999, $16.95) captures the flavor and sensibility of traditional Celtic spirituality for Christians.

Confident Witness, Changing World: Rediscovering the Gospel in North America, edited by Craig Van Gelder (Eerdmans, 1999, $24), explores how to make the gospel clear and the church relevant to the postmodern, post-Christian culture in North America.

Amazing Hope: A Ministry of Friendship to Homeless Families, compiled and written by Valerie Weaver, edited by Kate Kooker and Edith Yoder (Masthof Press, 1999, $7.50 postpaid), tells the story of Bridge of Hope, an organization founded by two Mennonite women that works to end homelessness one family at a time.

The Journey Toward Reconciliation by John Paul Lederach (Herald Press, 1999, $19.99) offers insights gained from years of work in international mediation and spiritual reflection on the task of reconciliation.

Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions by Craig L. Blomberg (Eerdmans, 1999, $20) illuminates the Bible's teaching on wealth and possessions and shows how it applies to Christians today.

Congregations and Pastors: Reflections on the Work of the Church by John A. Esau (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $12.95) is a selection of writings from Esau's popular column in *Mennonite Weekly Review*. The 100 short articles provide a helpful overview of the myriad challenges facing pastors and congregations as they work together.

Spirituality (six issues per year, $30) is a journal that explores the practical and philosophical aspects of spirituality, from the history of Christian spiritual movements to practical advice on prayer and meditation. Published in Britain, it is now distributed in North America. Order from Orbis Books, P.O. Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.

Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace by Perry B. Yoder (Evangel Publishing House, 1998, $10.95) is a second edition of Yoder's book, which shows that the Bible's teaching on peace is rooted in the concept of a just society.

Christians at Work: Not Business as Usual by Jan Wood (Herald Press, 1999, $10.99) gives every Christian worker the inspirational tools to move from toil to empowerment.

Abide With Me: More Hymns for Guitar by Tom Harder (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $15.95 for CD, $10.95 for cassette) follows his earlier Hymnal Masterworks classical guitar recording. All 15 featured hymns are from *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*

Sanctuary: Finding Safe Places for a Woman's Soul by Marsha Crockett (Bethany House, 1999, $9.99) looks at emotional dangers and how God's love addresses them.

Window to the World

Recommended reading

Window to the World: Extraordinary Stories From a Century of Overseas Mission 1900-2000 **by Tina Block Ediger (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $19.95) is a beautiful coffee-table book. You can pick it up at random and page through the arresting photos or read one of the many brief stories from both mission workers and nationals who came to faith as a result of General Conference Mennonite Church mission efforts. An inspiring book.—*gh***

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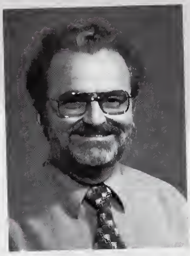


J. Lorne Peachey

The grand experiment (2)

What does it mean to live by faith?

When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?—Luke 18:8

Jesus tucked away the above question in a speech that he made to 70 disciples after they returned from a preaching and healing expedition. But it is a question that dominates all of salvation history. Will humans trust God? Will they, in their freedom, choose for God?

For us to answer is to give more than intellectual assent to the need for faith. It is to direct our lives by that faith. Philip Yancey, in his book *Disappointment With God* (Zondervan, 1992), says, "Each one of us must choose whether to live as if God exists, or as if he does not exist."

How do I live as though God exists?

1. To live by faith is to put God at the center of my universe. On paper, as a Christian, that's easy to do. In practice, I find it much more difficult.

How often, when I wake in the morning, do my first thoughts go to myself and my goals? These may or may not be what God has in mind. But I find that each day it takes effort to clear away the smog of self to discern what God would have of me.

How we choose to live will be our answer to the outcome of God's grand experiment in freedom, choice and faith.

I take some comfort in the fact that this struggle is a familiar one, depicted throughout Scripture. Not to have the struggle is the ultimate idolatry, because it puts me at the center of the universe. "True faith does not so much attempt to manipulate God to do our will as it does position us to do his will," Yancey writes.

2. To live by faith is to take the life and death of Jesus seriously. Even as God gave humans freedom of choice, God also went a step further and took away the penalty of our wrong choices through the death of Jesus.

It's easy these days not to take seriously Jesus and what he did about sin. Instead of admitting that I have sin, I find it much easier to talk about mistakes, failings or my human tendencies. But to live by faith, I must admit to sin and the need for forgiveness of that sin.

At the same time, I also find it easy to hang onto the fact that I sin, to get bogged down with my failures, to feel that I will always be less than God wants me to be. To take Jesus seriously is to believe that Jesus takes away what I have done and my bondage to the memory of that sin.

3. To live by faith is to allow the Spirit to guide my life. It is to follow the hunches I find within myself, to cultivate my conscience.

One of the ways the Spirit speaks is through conscience, not a popular concept in today's world. Much of humanity seems to have lost sight of the fact that we were created with one, or think that conscience is something to be denied, not cultivated.

Yet I know these nudgings within me. To live by faith is to follow them, to listen to the still small voice with its proddings.

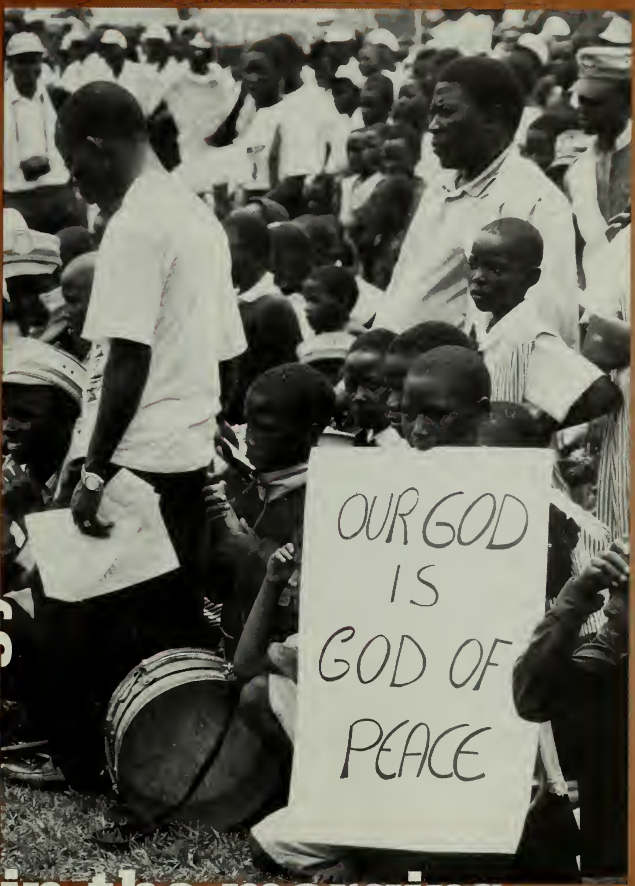
4. To live by faith is to subject our lives of faith to the community of believers. We Mennonites talk a lot about community. Our discussions wander often to how we can share more with each other in today's complex world. Laudable as this may be, we must not lose sight of the fact that one of the primary purposes of community is to help us in our relationship with God and in our expressions of faith in God.

It is in community that I must test what I hear God saying to me, the salvation that I experience in Jesus and the nudgings that I believe are from the Spirit. How easy it is to let my own needs and desires become the voice of the divine. It is only with the help of my sisters and brothers in the church that I can distinguish one from the other and put God's voice in the place that it should be in my life.

When God created humans with our freedom of choice, God also created one of history's most profound questions: "Will there be faith on earth?" So far the answer has been sometimes yes, sometimes no. The question continues to confront us today. How we choose to live is our answer to the outcome of God's grand experiment in freedom, choice and faith.—*jlp*

theMennonite

August 31, 1999


OUR GOD
IS
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PEACE

theology in the margins

page 4

6 Murder most foul
10 Lancaster seeing church secessions
12 Tanzanian church father dies at 90
20 War of the worlds

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

More St. Louis sentiments

In addition to worshiping with several thousand people inside large, air-conditioned halls at St. Louis 99, I also worshiped each noon with a small, quiet group from the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns in support of those who are not heterosexual. They could not publicize their services, were not included on the convention list of Mennonite subgroups, nor were they allowed a room in the convention center in which to meet.

On the first day, seven of us found the group outside the convention doors. Because of the dangerous heat, we urged them to take a chance and move just inside those doors. We read a litany of hope followed by the response, "And some days we grow weary." Through word of mouth, 20 found us the second day, then 30, then more than 40.

For me, it was new to be kept "outside the gates." I experienced viscerally just how that robs the spirit. It was schizophrenic. Inside I sang, "There's a wideness in God's mercy," listened to allusions of our special goodness as people of compassion and justice, read "You are welcome" in the new Mennonite brochure; then outside I experienced the sadness of the powerless who knew something different.

Tears flowed at the final service. More wounds had just been dealt by statements and an unexpected resolution inside the halls. We took Communion, broke bread and passed the cup to our neighbors as we looked to their pain. I only knew her first name, but she thanked me for being there. No, dear friend, thanks goes to you for your patience and forgiveness given to those of us so comfortable inside.—*Lo Smucker, Bluffton, Ohio*

I wonder if God was sad or amused as we gathered by the river at St. Louis 99. Many issues we Anabaptists have defined as central to our identity have driven us to division: method of baptism, length of hair, style and method of transportation, clothing, closures, marriage with Catholics, interracial marriages, militarism, keeping minutes of meetings, sanctuary for refugees, rights for migrant workers, women in leadership, divorce, membership in lodges, church building projects, various vices. …

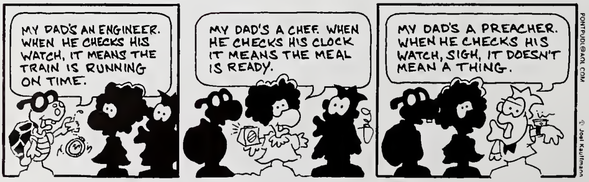
Most divisions have surfaced over single issues. The use of biblical interpretation has been the weapon of choice for both the left and right. We polarize into our own like-minded groups, selecting words such as "sinner" and "closed-minded" to sling like swords against our opponents. In retrospect, many of the issues of the past are no longer battlegrounds. The Bible hasn't changed; we have.

In each of these splits, people of God have been badly hurt, leaving lifelong scars. In each of these splits, people have become alienated from the church. Extremists often confuse stubbornness for deep conviction. The victims at the center of the storm seldom have a voice in the debate. Their humility leads them to Christ's open arms while we self-righteous "Christians" shout at each other, blind to our own sins of power, greed, gluttony and hate. And we call ourselves pacifists?

Let's all grasp the olive branch that merger offers us and learn to live and work together in peace.—*Carolyn Urich, Bluffton, Ohio*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


MY DAD'S AN ENGINEER. WHEN HE CHECKS HIS WATCH, IT MEANS THE TRAIN IS RUNNING ON TIME.
MY DAD'S A CHEF. WHEN HE CHECKS HIS CLOCK IT MEANS THE MEAL IS READY.
MY DAD'S A PREACHER. WHEN HE CHECKS HIS WATCH, SIGH, IT DOESN'T MEAN A THING.
PONTPUDL@AOL.COM
© Joel Kauffmann

Accountability in all areas

I agree with Harold Miller (Readers Say, July 27) when he notes that it is not uncommon for a Mennonite congregation to have a view unlike its conference or denomination. We see this most often in congregations that do not allow women in leadership positions and where there are members who are in the military or have a homosexual orientation—behaviors "soundly condemned by Mennonite faith statements."

Miller suggests that the churches that include homosexuals should be preaching about our church statements. I wonder how often military personnel hear sermons teaching that a person of peace cannot be a part of the U.S. war machine (a biblical and Mennonite belief). How often do women who feel called by God to ministry hear sermons on the need to encourage the acceptance of the gifts of all people (also a biblical and Mennonite belief)?

In word and deed, Jesus gave us numerous examples of how he wants us to share love, compassion and care to the marginal people in our society. Do military personnel, homosexuals and women in our congregations feel the love, compassion and care of their Mennonite brothers and sisters? If not, who is the sinner?

theMennonite

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readers say

Yes, let's be accountable to each other, but only if we are willing to examine all areas of our individual, family and congregational life. I think the only way we will find answers to this challenge is to pray and dialogue. Let's do lots of both.—*Joyce Hostetler, Columbus, Ohio*

God's intent

The disagreement over homosexuality in the church has to do with whether one believes homosexuality is a sin. One group of believers says quite definitely that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is a sin. Jesus' statement, "Repent and believe the gospel," means that homosexuality would have to be repented of in order to be born again. As in John 8 with the woman caught in adultery, he would have said to the homosexual, "Go and sin no more."

The other group of believers interprets what the Bible teaches as sinful behavior as not including homosexuality.

There is the reality that in Genesis, God created man and woman to become one flesh, that "it is not good for man to be alone." Thus, God's intent was for heterosexuality. This would be consistent with Jesus referring to God's intent in this way when the Pharisees challenged him regarding divorce (Matthew 19). Jesus' comment was that teaching allowing divorce was a departure from God's original intent and due to hardness of heart. It is this last reasoning that convinces me that the Bible teaches that homosexuality is a sin.
—*Steven Nyce, Hatfield, Pa.*

Appreciation

Thank you for Evan Oswald's letter, "On Purity and Love" (Readers Say, July 20). I find this perspective very helpful, not only for integration issues but also for all of our diversities.
—*Allen R. Linscheid, Reedley, Calif.*

Cover photo
by Dave Klassen, MCC

The theology of Jesus Christ in the

Part 1: Mennonite theology

by J. Denny Weaver

In writing about wider Christian history, Mennonites have usually appeared on the margins. Anabaptists are less important to the Reformation story than the "great reformers" Martin Luther and John Calvin, and North American Mennonites rate mention in lists of "other" small groups after the larger and important groups have been treated.

That marginalization appears in theology as well. As a rule, theology by Mennonites has served primarily the needs of the Mennonites on the margins, and only rarely have Mennonite theologians played more than marginal roles in conversations about supposed general theology that applies to all Christians.

A more profound dimension of marginality is an assumption made by most Mennonite theologians, that for classic issues (such as Christology and atonement), theology for Mennonites should develop out of the classic creeds and formulas of European Christendom. As a new, small group, it is assumed, Mennonites have little to contribute to general discussions of Christology and atonement.

This perceived marginality of theology for Mennonites is actually a backhanded way to anoint another tradition as the authority. The assumption is that the tradition to build on is more authentic and that our theological credibility comes through association with that more authentic mainstream.

When a theology has a name, such as "Mennonite" or "black," the name appears to render it marginal rather than general. But appearances can be deceiving. I want to explain why neither black theology nor Mennonite theology is really marginal and why black theology is not only relevant for Mennonites but can make an important contribution to the continuation of Mennonite churches as peace churches.

Visible contrast: The supposedly marginal Mennonite tradition professes to believe that following Jesus produces a community of disciples in visible contrast to the world and that rejection of the sword is integral to the teaching and life of Jesus, who forms the community. These beliefs provide a different perspective on the classic formulas from the standard books on the history of doctrine.

The benchmark christological formulas of Christendom came from the councils of Nicaea (A.D. 325) and Chalcedon (A.D. 451). Nicaea proclaimed Jesus as "one substance with the Father," and Chalcedon added that Jesus was both "truly God and truly man." These formulas are not wrong in and of themselves, if one is asking the questions they answer. However, we cannot follow a Jesus identified only in the abstract categories of "man" and "God." Without reference to such things as Jesus' rejection of the sword and his teaching about love of enemies, identifying Jesus in abstract categories of humanity and deity allows one to claim Jesus without acknowledging and being shaped by his life and teaching. In effect, they marginalize ethics from christological understanding, provide the space for ethics that do not stem from the particularity of Jesus.

Legal transaction: Similar observations and conclusions apply to the several versions of "satisfaction atonement," which has been the prevailing atonement image since the medieval church. The satisfaction atonement image understands humanity's problem as being unable to satisfy a debt. In the version of St. Anselm (1034-1109), Christ as man offered his death to satisfy the debt owed to God by humankind, while at the same time Christ as deity satisfied the debt, since only God himself could satisfy the debt. For later Protestantism, Christ's death satisfied the penalty demanded by God's law. In either version, Christ's death satisfies a requirement established by God, and the sinner who accepts Jesus' death escapes the debt or penalty owed and is thus reconciled to God. In either case, atonement consists of an abstract, legal transaction between God and the sinner, which takes place outside history and without reference to the particularity of Jesus.

Like the christological formulas, these atonement formulations allow one to claim salvation in Christ while neglecting or rejecting Jesus' teaching and example on the sword. The marginalization of the particularity of Jesus from the classic formulas of Christology and atonement reflects the fact that although their origins were earlier, they emerged as the prevailing consensus statements in the church

Definitions

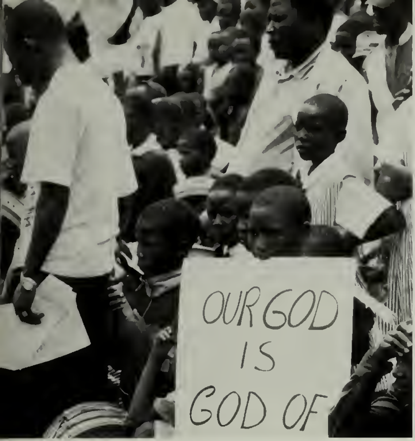
Christology: the theological interpretation of Jesus Christ

Atonement: Often used as a synonym for redemption, "at-one-ment" refers to the end-effect of the process of redemption: being at one with God

Christendom: A collective name for Christians, Christian countries and Christianity's cultural and religious influence

Eschaton: The return of Christ in glory at the end of history to judge the world

—*from* A Concise Dictionary of Theology *by Gerald O'Collins and Edward G. Farrugia (Paulist, 1991)*



The way to salvation: A prayer for peace rally in Uganda

MCC photo by Dave Klassen

We must put together Jesus' death on the cross and Jesus' life and teaching.

that had become the state church and that had accommodated the sword.

I object to Christendom's assumption that the characteristics that should shape theology for the peace church are marginal to the gospel. Following Jesus produces a community of disciples in visible contrast to the world, and rejection of the sword is integral to the teaching and life of Jesus, who forms the community. These ideas are intrinsic to the gospel—the good news—about Jesus Christ. It is really Christendom's theology that is marginal to the story of Jesus and to the good news about life in Christ. If we try to build a theology for Mennonites as a peace church on the classic creeds and formulas of Christendom, then we are claiming a foundation that has already made peace church assumptions marginal.

Christus Victor: Instead, our construction of Christology and atonement should begin with an atonement image anchored in both ends of the New Testament. A form of it was the dominant image in the early Christian centuries. This image has been called Christus Victor. It envisions a cosmic battle between the forces of God and the forces of evil, which hold captive the souls of humankind. Although the forces of evil kill Jesus, the reign of God triumphs through his resurrection. Through Christ the Victor, humanity is freed to celebrate salvation in the reign of God.

The symbolism of Revelation shows the book to be a multifaceted statement of Christus Victor imagery. The symbols of Revelation refer to first-century figures and events. For example, the seven-headed dragon with seven crowns and 10 horns is a transparent reference to Rome, which according to legend was built on seven hills. The seven crowns and 10 horns represent the seven crowned emperors and three pretenders (for a total of 10) between the time of Jesus' crucifixion and the date of the book's composition. Such historical antecedents make clear that the confrontation between the reign of God and the reign of Satan occurred in the historical arena and involved Jesus Christ and his church (the earthly manifestation of the reign of God) and the Roman empire (the earthly representative of all that is not under the rule of God).

At the other end of the New Testament, the Gospels depict the same confrontation between the representative of the rule of God, namely Jesus, and everything and everyone that is not under the rule of God. These reconstructions of what I call a historicized Christus Victor are also a narrative Christology that needs the particularity of Jesus. Since Jesus makes present the rule of God, it is indisputably clear that God's rule confronts evil nonviolently. To be reconciled to God—to be saved—means to become part of that story of the peaceable reign of God made visible by Jesus that stretches from creation to the eschaton.

This story is about God's grace to sinners. On their own they are helpless before the reign of evil, and it is God's grace that catches them up and calls them into God's reign. It is also a story of human responsibility since it is the lives of believing people who make visible and testify to the reality of the reign of God in the world. Our participation in this story clearly fits Paul's words, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Christus Victor was the dominant atonement image of the early church. As the church evolved into the state church and came to embrace the world, an atonement image of confrontation between the reign of God and the reign of Satan no longer made sense. Satisfaction atonement replaced it. But if following Jesus truly creates a church that poses a contrast to the world, Christus Victor is a better theology of the person and work of Christ than classic Christology and satisfaction atonement.

In Part 2 we will see what a representative of black theology has to say about Nicaea, Chalcedon, Constantine and Anselm.

Since Jesus makes present the rule of God, it is indisputably clear that God's rule confronts evil nonviolently. To be reconciled to God—to be saved—means to become part of that story of the peaceable reign of God made visible by Jesus that stretches from creation to the eschaton.

J. Denny Weaver is professor of religion at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Murder most foul

Detective novels can teach us about goodness.

by Kenneth L. Gibble

In the world as we know it, evil flourishes. And on the level of human reckoning, at least, crime frequently does pay. No wonder, then, that some of us turn with relief to the pages of a murder mystery.

Though not everyone enjoys reading murder mysteries, I do, and I'm not alone. Detective fiction accounts for a large share of today's book-selling market.

Why do so many of us get such enjoyment from tales of mayhem and murder? Do readers of whodunits have a morbid curiosity about death? Do we harbor a subconscious, pathological desire to commit murder ourselves? I hope not.

Whatever the reasons for the popularity of murder mysteries, there is obviously some kind of universal appeal at work here.

I talked with some people who also enjoy reading these stories. The first reason nearly everyone gave for reading murder mysteries is that they provide a means of escape. The stakes are high. A life has been snuffed out. Who did it? How? Why? How has the killer tried to cover his or her tracks? What miscalculations has the murderer made that will finally result in justice being served? How will the detective solve the mystery of "who done it"?

Some people said they enjoy trying to solve the puzzle, trying to guess who the killer is or how the detective will uncover the murderer's identity.

However, I believe the main reason for the popularity of these books is their code of justice. It's the cliché we learned as kids: Crime doesn't pay. The world of the detective novel is a moral, well-ordered world. Wrong fails; right prevails.

This is appealing because life often isn't that way. As one person I talked with said, "In the real world, so many times the truth never comes out." In the back alleys of our cities, monstrous crimes are committed that do not get solved. In the corridors of corporate control and political power, dishonest deals are made that never come to light.

In the world as we know it, evil flourishes. And on the level of human reckoning, at least, crime frequently does pay.

No wonder, then, that some of us turn with relief to the pages of a murder mystery. Here the universe is reduced to understandable and manageable size. Though it may appear the perfect murder has been committed, we know the truth will win out. Here nothing is hidden except to be disclosed, nor is anything secret except to come to light.

My own reading of these books as a grownup was sporadic until about 10 years ago. During an interview with Madeleine L'Engle, a well-known writer of books for children and adults and an unapologetic Christian, I asked her what books she enjoyed reading. Among others she mentioned the murder mysteries of Dick Francis.

"Who's he?" I asked.

After she told me about the kind of books Dick Francis writes, she said, "I think you'll enjoy him. As one of my friends said about his novels … 'Such goodness!' "

The power of evil: Upon sampling Francis I found his protagonists invariably average, decent, "good" people (never detectives) who find themselves victimized by evil. Sometimes the main character is accused of murder; sometimes an associate or loved one is murdered. But in either case, the tension in a Francis novel arises out of the dilemma faced by the main character (the same dilemma we all face to a greater or lesser degree): namely, how to respond to the power of evil when it invades one's life. What makes for "goodness" is the way the protagonist goes about resolving the situation, nearly always a way that draws upon the best instincts of people. It's a way that comes close to following the apostle Paul's dictum: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

It had never occurred to me to think of goodness in connection with detective novels. God knows there is more than enough badness in the world around us and inside us.

Murder is the primal crime, the universal taboo. In a sense, every murder mystery retells the tale of what Christians call "the fall." In *The Perfect Murder* (The Free Press, 1989), David Lehman writes: "The [detective] story's original crime ... becomes a secular version of original sin. Guilt, preceding birth, is a foregone conclusion, and the drama concerns the possibilities of absolution and redemption."

In the book of Genesis is an ancient story about one brother murdering another. When Cain kills Abel, it is no mere domestic dispute—a family argument that suddenly, tragically turns violent. It is premeditated, cold-blooded murder. It is indeed "murder most foul," that memorable phrase Shakespeare used in Hamlet to describe another man's murder of his brother.

"Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let us go out to the field.' And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him" (Genesis 4:8).

The story does not dwell on the details of the crime; no mention is made of how Cain took his brother's life or of the murder weapon, if there was one. Quickly the story moves on to introduce us to the Detective who will solve the crime.

"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' He said, 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?' And the Lord said, 'What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground!" (Genesis 4:9-10).

The Detective in this murder mystery takes on several roles. The Lord is Divine Detective, Jury and Judge, all rolled into one. The Lord solves the crime, apprehends the murderer, rends a verdict of guilty and passes sentence. This story, millenniums old, is as current as the latest crime thriller.

Naturally I recoil from the sight of Cain slaying his brother, just as I do whenever I read of murder in real life. I may even say to myself, "Now that is something I would never do. I'm not a murderer." But if I am honest, underneath this easy declaration lies a nagging, unspoken question: Am I absolutely certain I would not, could not, take another's life?

No, I am not certain. Whether I like to admit it to myself or not, I am capable of murder. So are you.

In this sense, at least, both the story in Genesis and the modern detective novel are true to life. They make us face the sinfulness that is part of our human condition. In these stories tragedy is neither trivialized nor suppressed.

Strange grace: But it is in another, better sense that these stories ring true. The story of Cain does not end in judgment and punishment. There is a strange grace in the story—mercy, though a severe mercy. The Lord puts a mark on Cain that will prevent anyone who sees him from killing him. Cain's life is preserved, but he will carry the mark of his crime with him. What's done cannot be undone. Cain cannot go home again. He is sentenced to be a wanderer for the rest of his life. But Cain is safe in God's protection. He has been given back his life by a gracious God.

If it's not exactly a happy ending, neither is it hopelessly tragic. Books we call murder mysteries are mysteries not only because they present a puzzle to be solved. They are mysteries as well because they ask, Who can fathom this puzzle, this mystery that is the life God gives us to live?

Our lives are a perplexing mixture of happiness and sadness, good fortune and bad, tragedy and comedy. At times, by the grace of God, we may catch a glimpse of a divine design at work, a design fashioned by a Holy Hand that holds us fast in unfailing love. We are pursued by One from whom no secrets are hidden, no power is too great to separate us and no sin is terrible enough to leave us lost, alone and unloved.

We are pursued by One from whom no secrets are hidden, no power is too great to separate us and no sin is terrible enough to leave us lost, alone and unloved.

In that faith, at last, I rest my hope, when, late at night, I turn the final page of the latest mystery novel that has kept me up too late, when I turn out the light and shuffle off to the bed that will give me a few hours of rest before I must get up to face the test of another day. I pull the covers up to my chin and maybe, if it seems right, breathe into the darkness a prayer I learned long, long ago: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake ..."

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

Who's who in whodunits

(A short, personal list)

G.K. Chesterton: He was an early 20th-century British writer whose detective was a perspicacious priest named Father Brown.

Dick Francis: The murders always take place on or near the race track. His novels exhibit "such goodness."

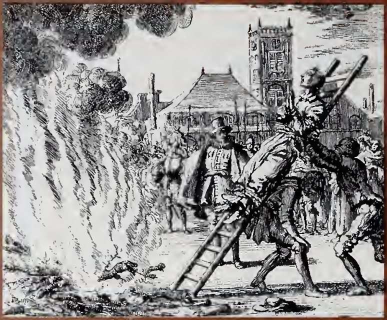
Tony Hillerman: Not one but two Navajo police detectives from New Mexico pursue justice in Hillerman's novels.

P.D. James: James ranks among the most popular current women writers of murder mysteries. Poet/police officer Adam Dalgliesh is the crime solver.

Harry Kemelman: Murders in his books are solved by the fictional Rabbi David Small.

Ellis Peters: The setting of one series of her mysteries is a monastery in medieval England. The detective is Brother Cadfael.

Dorothy Sayers: A British writer of an earlier era, Sayers was an outspoken Christian whose best stories featured Lord Peter Wimsey.—*Kenneth L. Gibble*



From Martyrs Mirror

Great martyrs don't make great mothers

by June Galle Krehbiel

I meet the martyrs in the mirror.

I don't want to meet them,
those souls whose faith
held firmer than their fragile bodies
burned by fire
on some city street
in Switzerland somewhere

Close, very close to my Galles and Krehbiels
who left later.
Where were my people during martyrdom,
perhaps lighting the fire?
Hiding?
Watching?
Recanting?

I saw Zurich from the train
that took us to Basel.
I felt like I was watching
the torture too.

My being there so much later,
thinking
I could have been there
so much earlier

On the street
running to hide,
cheering them on,
lighting the fire.

Maybe I take her baby
before the mother dies
and find the tongue screw
that falls from the ashes.

"Why keep that thing?"
Maybe my husband asks in our house.

"I want to remember her," I say.
"No, I want the baby to remember.
Great martyrs don't make great mothers."

Maybe we sit and look at each other.
Tears and anger leave me spiritless.

"What do we do with the baby?" he asks,
looking to the bed.

"We keep her. She's safe here."

"We're not on the run. So you think we're safe
We don't tell anyone about the woods behind the creek
You think no one will know?"

"I want this child. She is mine now."

"We will keep her. You've always had a heart of gold.
Next Sunday we take her for baptism.

We write her name in the Bible.
No one will suspect."

The words stick in my throat. "I cannot."

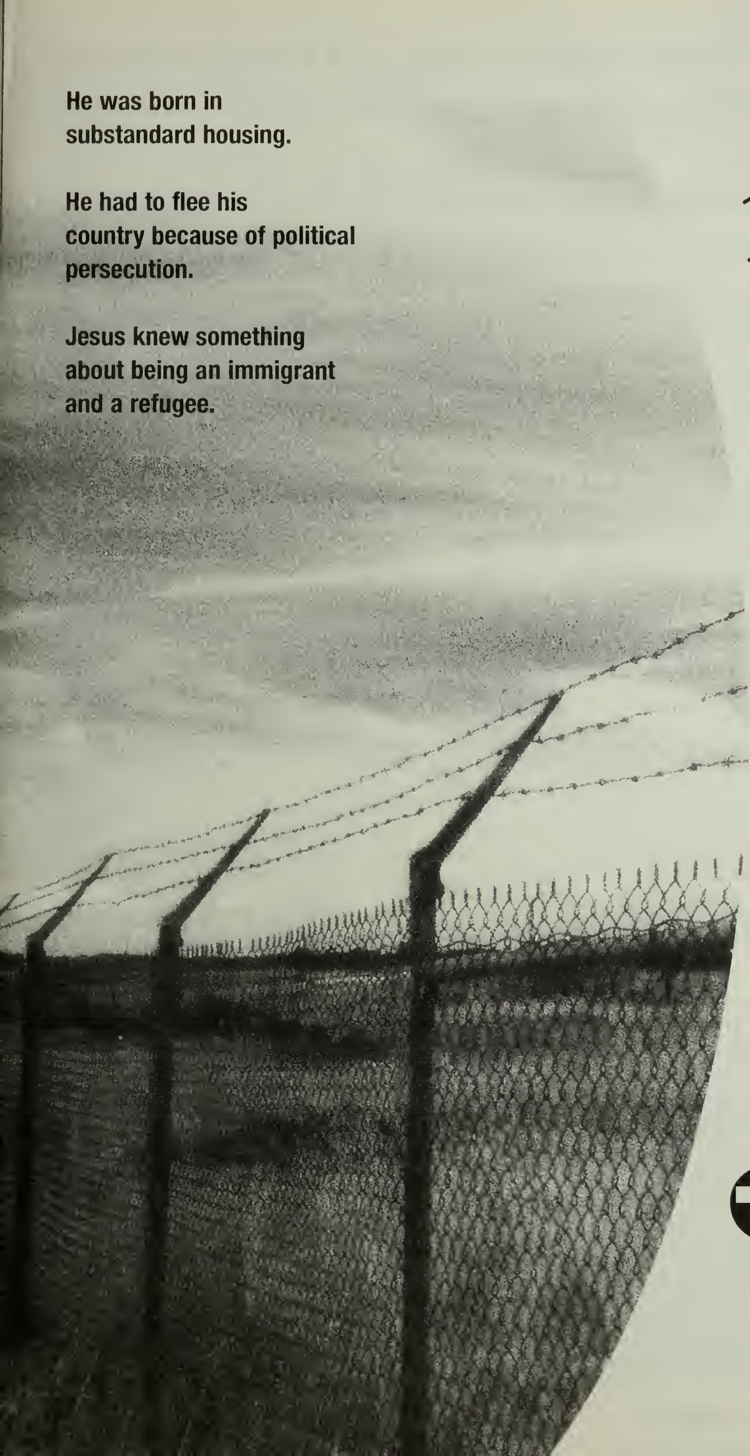
But then I remember,
Great martyrs don't make great mothers.

June Galle Krehbiel lives in Moundridge, Kan.

He was born in substandard housing.

He had to flee his country because of political persecution.

Jesus knew something about being an immigrant and a refugee.



Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) offers a series of stories, **"Welcoming the Newcomer"** in this publication in September and October.

The series explores the economic and social factors that spur immigration and discusses the economic and racial issues newcomers face when they arrive in their new home. The articles will also look at MCC advocacy on behalf of newcomers.

You'll meet Rebeca Jiminez Yoder, staff associate in the MCC Office on Immigration, and Dylan Morgan, an MCC worker in Belle Glade, Fla. Herself an immigrant from Costa Rica, Yoder now works as an advocate for those facing the many hurdles to legal residency. Morgan serves with an immigration rights advocacy group, working primarily with Haitian immigrants who tend the sugar cane fields of South Florida.

Look for **"Welcoming the Newcomer"** in this publication soon.

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Lancaster eyeing loss of 32 churches

Alabama, Florida members latest planning to leave

If there is a time for everything, as Ecclesiastes says, then now must be the time for congregations to leave Lancaster Conference. The denomination-size area conference has already lost 18 congregations this year, and the secession of another 14 is expected. That would mean the loss of nearly 2,000 members in a little more than a year.

In January, the three-congregation Mount Zion District joined the more geographically appropriate Franklin Conference. Then in March, the 15 congregations of the Keystone District formed their own independent group, Keystone Mennonite Fellowship. Now Lancaster's congregations in Alabama and Florida are planning to leave early next year.

There are different reasons behind the departures, and their timing is purely coincidental, says Lancaster conference minister Lindsey Robinson. And all have been more amicable than hostile. Mount Zion, with about 110 members and isolated on the conference's western edge, was released to join Franklin, which was closer in proximity (see story, left). The Keystone congregations, with 800 members and more theologically and culturally conservative than much of the rest of Lancaster, had been working on their own for several years. Among their concerns were dress, the prayer covering, and divorce and remarriage.

"The Keystone congregations had issues which couldn't be resolved unless we turned back the clock," Robinson says.

While the Keystone departure was a decade in coming, he says, the impending loss of the Alabama and Florida congregations is new, prompted largely by geography and missions.

Conference moderator Ervin Stutzman suggests that the creation of the new Mennonite Church USA out of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church now offers congregations an opportunity to redefine their connections to the church.

Lancaster is the largest U.S. area conference, stretching from New England to the Deep South and currently with 20,000 members in 222 congregations organized into 30 districts. It is also one of the most theologically and culturally diverse, ranging from mainstream to conservative in dress, worship and other areas.

In the Alabama and Florida districts—14 congregations with about 1,000 people—the genesis for independence came 10 years ago when conference leaders affirmed a mission plan for congregations in the region, say bishops J.D. Landis and Steve Longenecker. That sent the districts in the direction of developing a Southern-style approach to being Mennonite rather than simply reflecting Pennsylvania. Furthermore, they say, the geographic connections to Pennsylvania make little sense now some 50 years after Lancaster started church-planting efforts in the South.

Longenecker compared the relationship of the Southern districts to Lancaster to a young adult child and a parent. "We don't necessarily have an independent spirit, but we are quite far from our parent in terms of region, in terms of culture," he says.

Another contributing factor to the districts' leaving is women in leadership, an issue now under discussion in Lancaster. "We are clearly together in opposition to ordination of women," Landis says. "This helps provide our impetus."

The new group will probably not be part of the new Mennonite Church USA, eschewing relationships with either Gulf States or Southeast, the two existing area conferences in the South. Longenecker says they do not have the energy, resources or desire to participate in broader denominational efforts. Instead, the group wants to concentrate on local missions.

"It's a continuation of what God has been already doing with us," Longenecker says. "We're more of a movement with functional structures. We're not trying to be a conference."

Stutzman says the move makes sense for the Alabama congregations to develop their own identity. But he says he hopes they will "develop more meaningful connections with other Mennonite churches in their region."

While the separation is not expected to be finalized until early next year, the Alabama congregations have begun developing goals and mission strategies. "It is very important to help persons understand that the independence isn't intended to be isolating," Landis says. "The more clearly we can see who we are, the more effectively we can partner. If we are going to develop as a center of mission, we need to develop more independence."—*Steve Kriss with Rich Preheim*

District gets closer thanks to move

Sharpsburg, Md., home to Dargan Mennonite Church, is 125 miles from Lancaster, Pa., the headquarters and area of concentration for Lancaster Conference.

By contrast, Sharpsburg is only about 40 miles from the Franklin Conference office in Chambersburg, Pa.

After more than 30 years of long-distance relationships with Lancaster, Dargan and the rest of the Mount Zion District—Community Mennonite Church in Hagerstown, Md., and Mount Airy (Md.) Mennonite Church—in January joined Franklin Conference. There was nothing acrimonious about the change; it was simply a matter of location.

"They related to the Lancaster office, but that's pretty far to the office," says Franklin administrative secretary Jerry Roth. "They are much closer to us.

"It was a very mutual thing for both of us."—*Rich Preheim*

Campaign against Iraq sanctions gets critical, sympathetic responses from congressional offices

WASHINGTON—Rose Byler of Goshen, Ind., had a message for Rep. John Spratt Jr., D-S.C., when she sent him a package of food.

The package contained the amount of food allotted each month to each Iraqi citizen. Under United Nations sanctions, each person is entitled to five pounds of wheat flour, one pound of sugar, a half pound of beans, one ounce of tea, one ounce of salt, eight ounces of cooking oil and one ounce of cheese.

"This is not enough food for a week!" wrote 8-year-old Byler in a letter accompanying her food package. "My family would eat this in less than a day! Please lift the sanctions."

Her efforts were part of an Aug. 2-6 campaign by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. to call for an end to the U.N. sanctions, which were put in place nine years ago in the wake of the Persian Gulf War. Across the United States, congregations, small groups and individuals delivered or sent food boxes to 170 local congressional offices. On Capitol Hill, the MCC U.S. Washington Office delivered boxes to 365 congressional offices.

Organizers wanted to remind lawmakers visually that civilians, especially children, suffer severely under the current restrictions on food and medicine imports.

"We wanted to do something ... that would build on the long biblical tradition of creative prophetic advocacy," says J. Daryl Byler, director of the MCC U.S. Washington Office.

While responses to the message were generally sympathetic, the method of advocacy raised a considerable amount of controversy. Even before delivery of the boxes was completed, several bipartisan aides called MCC to protest the use of food in calling attention to the food shortage in Iraq. A common reaction was that MCC should send the food to Iraq rather than Congress.

One aide, declaring the effort had backfired, accused MCC of wasting food, "the worst sin in the world."

"This was not about wasting food but rather about leveraging food," Byler says. "In addition to sending the message that the oil-for-food program is not an adequate antidote for sanctions, MCC and others encouraged Congress to pass the food along to a food pantry. Much of the food was twice used."

The office of Rep. Luis Gutierrez, D.-Ill., arranged for a local food kitchen to pick up the contents of the some 125 boxes left at his office.

Any effects of the advocacy project remain to be seen. So far no new legislation has been introduced. But on the second day of the food-box deliveries, Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., circulated a letter urging her colleagues to remember the children suffering under "the weight of sanctions" when considering policy toward Iraq.

Sadie Mast of Oklahoma City helped deliver boxes to four congressional offices in the city. "Aides in the office of Rep. Frank Lucas (R) were especially sympathetic when we told them that good people are dying in Iraq," she says.

In the Houston office of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R), the entire staff came out to see the food box brought by Houston Mennonite Church. "They seemed very interested and asked questions about who we were and why we feel the way we do," says pastor Dayvid Graybill.

But an aide in one office reportedly took the box and remarked, "Well, this can't be so bad. It's pretty heavy."—*Elisabeth T. Harder for MCC News Service*

We wanted to do something ... that would build on the long biblical tradition of creative prophetic advocacy.

—J. Daryl Byler

GCMC/MBM photo

Where in the world?

Alice and Phil Shenk (right), Mennonite Board of Missions workers to Dagestan, help children of overseas mission workers locate their homes on a world map during last month's annual mission seminar for MBM and Commission on Overseas Mission workers. The event, which drew 150 adults and children from five continents, was held on the campus of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville prior to St. Louis 99. Adult participants addressed topics such as missions in the 21st century, spiritual warfare, partnership and mission structures in the integrated church. Meanwhile, 46 children and youth discussed what it is like to be "missionary kids"—North Americans growing up in another culture. Adults and children met together for worship and storytelling.

Crushing Cambodian violence

A bulldozer flattens assault weapons as part of a peace campaign by the Cambodian government. More than 3,300 AK-47 and M-16 rifles and B-40 rocket launchers, collected from Phnom Penh households, were destroyed in front of 10,000 spectators, including Mennonite Central Committee workers. Some bulldozers had to drive over the weapons eight times before adequately crushing them. Plans are for the metal to be used to make a statue of a knotted gun. After decades of war, Cambodia is awash with guns that are now commonly used in robberies, domestic disputes, murders, kidnappings and smuggling. MCC is a founding member of the Working Group for Weapons Reduction in Cambodia, a coalition of local and international organizations and individuals working to remove and destroy small arms from society. MCC worker Edgar Janz from Calgary serves with the organization.

MCC photo by Edgar Janz

Tanzania's first bishop dies at age 90

Longtime leader called African Mennonite church father

SHIRATI, Tanzania—Zedekia Marwa Kisare, for nearly half a century a leader in the Tanzania Mennonite Church (KMT) and its first bishop, died July 16 at an estimated age of 90.

Kisare was remembered for his ability to make the gospel relevant to local cultures. The KMT today includes 15 language groups.

"Bishop Kisare was somehow able to rise above tribal loyalties and affiliations and bring unity to the whole church," says Don Jacobs, former Mennonite missionary to eastern Africa. "He was a man of peace and reconciliation."

At an Aug. 12 memorial service in Lititz, Pa., Mennonite Central Committee Africa administrator Tesfatsion Dalelew called Kisare "the father of Tanzania Mennonite Church and of all Mennonite churches in Africa."

The funeral was held July 21 at Shirati Mennonite Church. All KMT bishops and many pastors were in attendance, as were five Kenyan bishops. Also in attendance were a number of Tanzanian government officials, including former president Julius Nyerere. Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions sent representatives. A crowd of more than 2,000 people filed past Kisare's coffin outside the church entrance. He was buried next to his wife, Suzana.

Kisare became a Christian at about 10 when he first heard the gospel from itinerant African evangelists. At age 26, he was hired by Elam Stauffer, the first Mennonite missionary to the region, to help construct Eastern Mennonite Mission's mission station at Shirati.

After seven years of work, Kisare was confronted by Jesus, who told him, "I am drawing a circle." According to African tradition, what matters is the circle around a person, including the extended family, which is the traditional African village. "The church is the new circle, the village of God," Jesus told Kisare. "It includes all who confess me, Jesus, as Savior and Lord."

Kisare

Kisare became a KMT pastor in 1950 and was ordained bishop in 1967, a position he held until retiring four years ago.

Joseph Shenk, the scribe for Kisare's autobiography, recalled that Kisare was healed of congestive heart failure when he repented of his fear of the responsibilities of bishop.

He was also active in the Christian Council of Tanzania and attended the 1972 Mennonite World Conference assembly in Curitiba, Brazil.

He is survived by eight daughters, one son, 44 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.—*EMM and MWC news services*

EMU alumnus' goal: spike racism

Jason Axford is in Europe trying to land a spot on a professional volleyball team, hoping the exposure will help him represent his home country at the 2000 Olympics.

Axford, a 1998 graduate of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Va., is from South Africa—and black. One reason he wants to play for his homeland's Olympic volleyball team is to combat the bigotry and racism that still exist in South Africa, despite the official dismantling of apartheid.

If his one-month trip to Europe doesn't work out, he plans to attend graduate school at EMU, where he has been helping coach the men's volleyball team. —*Harrisonburg News-Record*

China is next step on new worker's eventful faith journey

ELKHART, Ind.—Kelli Short's 21 years have taken her out of the Mennonite Church, in which she was raised, led her to question the existence of God, found her spending four months in a Buddhist nunnery in Nepal and returned her only recently to Mennonitism.

Now the next step of her journey is a two-year assignment as an English teacher with China Educational Exchange under Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

"I feel particularly called and gifted for long-term service abroad," Short says. "I believe God wants to use the relationships and understanding I have developed with people of other belief systems to [create] interfaith dialogue.

"Missions is one of my faith needs, the next logical step."

Short, who graduated in spring from Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., will teach conversational English to undergraduates at a university of technology in Zheng Zhou.

She grew up in College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. "I was a Mennonite in culture, not in belief: I gladly accepted many of the values I was taught—pacifism, service, simplicity and compassion—but God seemed almost incidental to the whole thing," Short says.

As she grew older, she became estranged from the church as she learned of its involvements in systems she felt were prejudiced and oppressive. By her junior year in college, she was "probably an agnostic," she says.

All the same, her convictions about service and peace kept her linked to her congregation, where she served on the peace committee and obtained mediation training. In 1997, those convictions led her abroad. She helped set up a summit in Amsterdam, worked at a reconciliation center in Dublin, Ireland, and worked to convert an unused military base in Italy into a peace center.

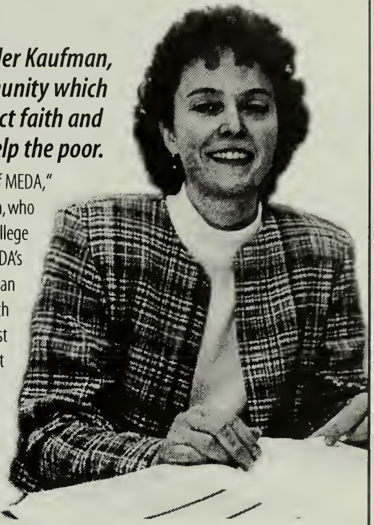
During the fall of 1997, Short spent a semester studying in Tibet. She then went to Nepal the next summer to study at a Tibetan Buddhist nunnery near Kathmandu. Although Buddhism was attractive to her, it didn't call her to make a change in her life.

Upon returning to the United States, Short was invited to a Vineyard congregation in Virginia by a close friend. "I was going through the most difficult, painful time in my life," she says. "[The congregation] brought out all the defenses and intellectual resistance in me, but God broke through it. For the first time, I felt the presence of God in my life."

After several months of solidifying her sense of faith, Short was baptized at her home congregation, College Mennonite Church in Goshen. A month after graduating from Carleton she was commissioned by her congregation for her assignment to China.

"I hope I will experience a deepening of faith during my assignment," Short says, "and I hope I find China is a place I can be for a long time."—*Grant E. Rissler for MBM News Service*

MEDA:
Creating community to help the poor



For Cheryl Detweiler Kaufman, MEDA is a community which helps her connect faith and work to help the poor.

"I like the chapter aspect of MEDA," says Detweiler Kaufman, who teaches business at Goshen College and is a member of MEDA's Michiana chapter. "You can develop relationships with others who share your interest in helping poor people start their own businesses, find support as you connect your own faith and work, and work with others to help low income people locally."

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MDS hay on the way to dry Eastern farmers

AKRON, Pa.—Relief is on its way to drought-stricken farmers in the eastern United States, but not in the form of rain. Thanks to Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), truckloads of hay from well-watered Kansas, Michigan, Wisconsin and Ontario are making their way to Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and other places where pastures are dry and cattle have little or nothing to graze.

MDS initiated a mid-August hay drive after farmers in Michigan offered their bumper crop of hay to needy farmers in the east.

MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker was visiting with Virgil Kauffman and Jim Scott of the Michigan MDS unit. "And they mentioned that they knew of farmers who had an abundance of hay and wanted to send it east," he says. "So we made some connections between farmers who have hay and those that don't and set up a system of contact people, and the hay started moving."

The hay, received by donation as well as purchased at low cost, is being delivered to farmers devastated by lack of rain in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic. Used to feed cattle, the hay is normally needed to carry the farmers through the winter months. But not this year, according to Nelson Bricker, Cumberland Valley (Pa.) MDS unit chair. Because the drought has withered pastures, he says, farmers have been feeding hay to their cattle, trying to get through the summer but leaving nothing for the fall or winter.

"I spoke with one farmer who only has a one-month supply left of hay to feed his 60 cattle," says Tom Weaver, distribution coordinator in Virginia. "The response to the need for hay has been very positive There is hay just waiting to be transported."

Two truckloads of hay have arrived in Virginia, and three more are on the way. A load will also be delivered in Lebanon County, Pa.

Despite a few small showers, the effects of weeks of high temperatures and no rain will continue to be seen months from now.

"There's a lot of excitement and enthusiasm about this now, but this will be a long-term project, and we're looking for long-term support," Smucker says. "We may get a few nice rains, but that won't eliminate the problem that started in May."

MDS is asking for donations to cover transportation costs as well as to pay for buying some hay.—*Marisa Doncevic for MCC News Service*

MCC exploring Turkey quake aid

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), working with partner organizations in the Middle East, is exploring ways to respond to the Aug. 17 earthquake that shattered Turkey.

Countless other relief agencies are already at work in the region. MCC, which has no workers or projects in Turkey, doesn't want to duplicate those efforts, says Amgad Tadros of MCC's Middle East Department.

"We need more time to find out how we can best help in their terrible tragedy," he says. "In a disaster of this magnitude, needs will remain serious for many months."

MCC is accepting donations for relief efforts in Turkey. The funds will either be used by MCC or channeled to other organizations.
—MCC News Service

NEW MCC VIDEO!

CHANGE OF COMMAND

"What ultimately drove me from the military was the fact that I was trying to serve two masters and could not."
—Dick Davis, Dallas, Texas

Six military veterans tell how their journey of faith led them to become conscientious objectors to war. Contact the MCC office nearest you to borrow or purchase *Change of Command.*
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Colleges listed in magazine rankings

The four U.S. Mennonite four-year colleges have made *U.S. News & World Report*'s annual rankings of best colleges in the United States. Goshen (Ind.) College made the fourth tier of the 159 top schools in the national liberal arts colleges category. The 585 schools in that category require higher college entrance test scores than regional liberal arts colleges.

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., was ranked 10th among Southern regional liberal arts colleges. The school also led *U.S. News & World Report*'s study-abroad rankings; 86 percent of all EMU students take at least one course in a foreign country. Goshen was 15th with 52 percent.

Bluffton (Ohio) College and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., were among the 34 schools in the top tier of the Midwestern regional liberal arts colleges category. Bluffton was tied for 26th, and Bethel was tied for 31st.

Longtime South American missionary dies at 83

ELKHART, Ind.—B. Frank Byler, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Argentina and Uruguay for 36 years, died July 29 at Goshen (Ind.) General Hospital. He was 83.

Byler and his wife, Anna, went to Argentina in 1947, where they served until 1961. Their assignments included pastoring several congregations and teaching and administering at the Mennonite Bible School in Bragado.

In 1961, the Bylers moved to Uruguay, where they worked at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Montevideo. They returned to Argentina 14 years later and were involved in leadership training in local congregations until 1982, when they moved to Goshen. Since then, Frank Byler had served several interim pastorates.

Survivors include his wife and five children. *—MBM News Service*

Pastors urged to address millennial tensions

BLUFFTON, Ohio—The impending new millennium is a rare opportunity for pastors and church leaders to urge renewed loyalty to God. But to do that they will have to enter the "millennial barnyard," said John Dey at an Aug. 8-10 conference on apocalypticism and millennialism at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Dey, pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Pandora, Ohio, noted the noisy roosters of prophetic panic that have already stirred up great fear and excitement. Pastors, he said, should address the issue head on by challenging popular exploitations of contemporary anxiety and urging their members to "embrace all of life, living in the tension between the now and the not yet."

by the way ...

The Swiss ancestors of current Mennonites were converted to Christianity by Celtic evangelists from the British Isles 800 years before the birth of Anabaptism.
—Missionary Messenger

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Events

Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., 125th homecoming celebration, Sept. 4-5. Contact 402-723-4562 or bethesda@telcoweb.net.

Herold Mennonite Church, Bessie, Okla., centennial celebration, Sept. 11-12. Contact: Nancy Koehn, 580-832-2961, or Jane Janzen, 580-337-6353.

Casselman River Amish and Mennonite Historians annual meeting, Sept. 17-18, Maple Glen Mennonite Church, Grantsville, Md. Contact 301-895-4488 or abcdefor@juno.com.

Events

Bornman, Irene, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a three-year assignment with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) in Senegal.

Ewert, Linda, on July 1 began as director of ministry development at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Fast, Darrell, on Aug. 22 concluded a pastorate at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Frey, Nancy, and Bruce Yoder, Goshen, Ind., are beginning three-year assignments with MBM in Benin.

Frisbie, Carol and William F. Jr. are beginning three-year assignments with MBM in Senegal.

Hartzler, Brent and Lourdes, Lancaster, Pa., are beginning three-year assignments with MBM in Argentina.

Short, Kelly, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a three-year China Educational Exchange assignment with MBM and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

Unruh, Sandy, on Aug. 15 concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kan.

Births

Bergen, Olivia Mae, Aug. 4 to Jessica (Siebert) and Matthew Bergen, Paxton, Neb.

Bollinger, Evan Wyatt, July 27, to Edward and Kim (Mast) Bollinger, Harrisonburg, Va.

Bruch, Jacob Elijah, July 15, to Brandy Garcia, Hutchinson, Kan.

Bybee, Paityn Kellie, Aug. 3, to Amie (Epp) and Scott Bybee, Omaha, Neb.

Carpenter, Alan Michael, July 29, to Melissa (Whaley) and Norman Carpenter, Phoenix.

Claassen, Camryn Annelise, July 21, to Craig and Laura (Chapel) Claassen, Manhattan, Kan.

Cook, Caitlyn Grace Yoder, May 31, 1999, received for adoption June 2, by Mike and Sherrill Yoder Cook, Iowa City, Iowa.

Derstine, Hannah Elizabeth, July 27, to Jana (Alderfer) and Wendell Derstine, Telford, Pa.

Doll, Brianna Nicole, Aug. 5, to Patricia and William Doll, Lansdale, Pa.

Fannin, Kathryn Ann, July 28, to Lisa (Shank) and Steve Fannin, Newport News, Va.

Fendelet, Megan Rose, July 16, to Carla (Martin) and Jeff Fendelet, Tofield, Alta.

Hamilton, Haley Allison, Aug. 10, to Corey and Jeanine (Kauffman) Hamilton, Orrville, Ohio.

Harmelink, Megan Leigh, July 23, to Erin and Tonya Harmelink, Goshen, Ind.

Hathaway, Hunter David, Aug. 12, to David and Jeanette (Kauffman) Hathaway, Goshen Ind.

Janzen, Hannah Marie, July 22, to Elizabeth (Porras) and Matthew Janzen, Manhattan, Kan.

Kennel, Timothy Christian, Aug. 3, to Kathryn (Hagel) and Timothy Kennel, Souderton, Pa.

Landis, Emily Rose, July 14, to Ken and Pam (Hochstedler) Landis, Orrville, Ohio.

Leader, Cameron Derek, June 24, to Cheryl (Stiles) and Shawn Leader, Chesapeake, Va.

Markley, William Kenneth, Aug. 12, to Diane (Bland) and William Markley, Harleysville, Pa.

Martens, Emma Catherine, July 28, to Dale and Monica (Rempel) Martens, Steinbach, Man.

Martin, Chad Curtis, Aug. 4, to Curtis and Elizabeth Martin, Harrisonburg, Va.

Peters, Conner Dean, Aug. 3 to Amy (Reynoldson) and Wes Peters, Ceresco, Neb.

Petrosino, Jordan Rames, July 30, to Lisa and Robert Petrosino, Phoenix.

Rager, Michael Ryan, Aug. 2, to Gary and Melissa (Eash) Rager, Davidsville, Pa.

Read, Owen Craig, June 30, to Cheryl (Buehler) and Ted Read, Elmira, Ont.

Roth, Brady Jean, July 21, to Kristy (Skinner) and Travis Roth, Washington, Iowa.

Sauder, Kayla Marie, July 18, to Dean and Doris (Burkholder) Sauder, Quarryville, Pa.

Schmidt, Joshua Michael, Aug. 5, to Sheri (Schrag) and Warren Schmidt, Canton, Kan.

Sears, Dietrich Lee, July 15, to Lonnie and Sandy (Graber) Sears, Kalona, Iowa.

Sechrist, Nicole Joy, July 17, to April (Swanson) and Erik Sechrist, Nappanee, Ind.

Suydam, Aubrey Nicole, July 23, to Clayton and Renee (Miller) Suydam, Allensville, Pa.

Tro, Kenneth Jorge, Aug. 1, to Jorge and Karen (Kauffman) Tro, Canby, Ore.

Weaver, Katlyn Marie, Aug. 12, to Jeremy and Joan (Steiner) Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Yutzy, Nicholas John, July 18, to John and Linda Bender Yutzy, Iowa City, Iowa.

Zook, Jacob Randall, July 21, to Randall and Wendy (Withelm) Zook, Souderton, Pa.

Marriages

Alderman/Martens: Roger Alderman, Lyons, Kan., and Sara-Liz Martens, Inman, Kan., July 31 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Allebach/Sheaffer: Karyn Allebach, Harleysville, Pa., and Ryan Sheaffer, Grantham, Pa., Aug. 7 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Andrews/Fulk: Jonathan Andrews, South Bend, Ind., and Susan Fulk, Maysville, Ky., June 26 at Southland Christian Church, Lexington, Ky.

Bauman/Skerritt: Coralie Bauman, Elmira, Ont., and Steve Skerritt, Alma, Ont., July 10 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Bergey/Mead: Christopher Bergey, Bethesda, Md., and Wendy Mead, Columbia, Md., July 10 at Columbia.

Brubaker/Martin: Jennifer Brubaker, Manheim, Pa., and Jason Martin, Ephrata, Pa., July 31 at Middle Creek Church of the Brethren, Lititz, Pa.

Carlson/Kraehling: Erica Carlson, Alma, Ont., and Scott Kraehling, Alma, July 31 at Drayton (Ont.) Community Mennonite Fellowship.

Clark/Yu: Elizabeth Clark, Kinzers, Pa., and Ming Yu, Atglen, Pa., Aug. 7 at Old Road Mennonite Church, White Horse, Pa.

Dodge/Hochstedler: Jorna Dodge, Nairobi, Kenya, and Tim Hochstedler, Kalona, Iowa, Aug. 7.

Duerksen/Gore: Logan Duerksen, Hillsboro, Kan., and Tara Gore, Larned, Kan., Aug. 1.

Ediger/Hanson: Rick Ediger, Cedar Park, Texas, and Stefanie Hanson, Austin, Texas, Aug. 24 at University Christian Church, Austin.

Flueckiger/Preheim: Judy Flueckiger, Berne, Ind., and Scott Preheim, Elkhart, Ind., June 26 at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Gardiner/Martin: Gail Gardiner, Elmira Ont., and Murray Martin, Moorefield, Ont., June 26.

Giesbrecht/Schaap: Jonathon Giesbrecht, Steinbach, Man., and Mandy Schaap, Steinbach, July 18 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Hernandez/Histand: Nelson Hernandez, Managua, Nicaragua, and Tonya Histand, Perkasie, Pa., Aug. 7 at her parents' home.

Jantz/Shirk: Tim Jantz, Goshen, Ind., and Melissa Shirk, Goshen, June 12 at Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Janzen/Swartzentruber: Stephen Janzen, Buhler, Kan., and Monica Swartzentruber, Phoenix, Aug. 7 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Kehler/Schellenberg: Chris Kehler, Steinbach, Man., and Charis Schellenberg, Steinbach, July 31 at Steinbach.

Kleinschmidt/Spaeth: Heidi Kleinschmidt, Independence, Ohio, and Bill Spaeth, Streetsboro, Ohio, July 31 at Aurora (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

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Lloyd/Paine: Todd Lloyd, Newville, Pa., and Kate Paine, Souderton, Pa., July 24 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Manley/Schweitzer: J.D. Manley, Goshen, Ind., and Marilyn Schweitzer, Elkhart, Ind., Aug. 7 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Marcho/Yoder: Julie Marcho, Harleysville, Pa., and Chad Yoder, Harleysville, July 31 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Miller/Trueblood: Jamie Miller, Kalona, Iowa, and Nate Trueblood, West Lafayette, Ind., Aug. 7.

Nedimyer/Sims: Tracy Nedimyer, Stephens, Pa., and John Sims, Stephens, June 25 at Ephrata, Pa.

Newcomer/Richmond: Kevin Newcomer, Wakarusa, Ind., and Shelly Richmond, New Paris, Ind., July 31 at Wakarusa Missionary Church.

Nickerson/Warner: Kenny Nickerson, Arlington, Kan., and Elisha Warner, Arlington, July 30 at Hutchinson, Kan.

Rosenhagen/Siemens: Kenton Rosenhagen, Cheney, Kan., and LeAyre Siemens, Buhler, Kan., June 5 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Sensenig/White: Gerald Sensenig, Holtwood, Pa., and Charlene White, Manheim, Pa., July 24 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Steiner/Yoder: Julie Steiner, Kidron, Ohio, and Jon Yoder, Dalton, Ohio, June 12 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Bartel, Johnnie, 72, Hillsboro, Kan., died July 25. Spouse: Myrta Klassen Bartel. Parents: John and Susie Friesen Bartel (deceased). Other survivors: children Ron, Marlin, Doug, Kathy Zimmerman, Brad; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Eby, Lloyd, 87, Lititz, Pa., died July 23. Spouse: Martha Leaman Eby (deceased). Parents: Ira and Ella Book Eby (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Ellen Leaman, Wilmer, John, Marlin; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 26 at Stumptown Mennonite Church, Bird in Hand, Pa.

Ediger, Florence Froese, 84, Buhler, Kan., died Aug. 4. Spouse: David Ediger (deceased). Parents: Cornelius and Hilda Voth Froese (deceased). Survivors: children Karen Duncan, Sondra Thompson, David, Russell; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Esau, Arnold, 90, Buhler, Kan., died July 30. Spouse: Alice Esau. Parents: Abraham and Katie Schroeder Esau (deceased). Other survivors: Neva Kay; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 1 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Graber, Raymond, 88, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 6. Spouse: Mildred Liechty Graber. Parents: Eli and Nancy Goldsmith Graber (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Ken, Dave, Deloris Good; 10 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Good, Harlen, 83, Lititz, Pa., died Aug. 6. Spouse: Anna Croft Good. Parents: Moses and Kathryn Stahl Good (deceased). Other survivors: children Irvin, Kenneth, Jay, Rhoda Martin, Lorraine Gingrich; 12 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Ephrata (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hofstra, Ann (nee Aukje Rijpkema), 82, Drayton, Ont., died Aug. 1 of a heart attack. Spouse: Gabe Hofstra. Other survivors: children Linda Turriff, Hannah Veld, Anne Roth, Andy, Gerrit, Joyce Stanic; 20 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Drayton Community Mennonite Fellowship.

Lehman, Ella Mae, 63, Kidron, Ohio, died July 31. Spouse: J. E. Lehman. Parents: Elmer and Rosella Roggie Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: children Galen, Glenda Ervin, Kevin, Wendy; four grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 4 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Miller, Amy Miller, 89, Kalona, Iowa, died July 29. Spouse: Roy Miller. Parents: Samuel and Sarah Miller Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Merle, Daniel; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 1 at Kalona.

Miller, Elmer, 73, Topeka, Ind., died July 21 of heart failure. Spouse: Anna Miller. Parents: Christ and Sara Schrock Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Phyllis Mishler, Karen Fergison, Roger, Cliff; 11 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 24 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Miller, Gladys Taylor, 82, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 14. Spouse: (1st) Owen Fahrney (deceased); (2nd) Harold Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Owen Fahrney Jr., Betty Frye; stepdaughters Edith Ritchie, Eva Glanzer, Alma Hottinger; 15 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 17 at Broadway, Va.

Miller, Jemima Mae, 86, Millersburg, Ind., died July 14. Spouse: Roy Miller (deceased). Parents: Tobias and Mattie Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Loleta Yoder, Bernita Hall, Francis, Floyd, Fred, Farrel; 22 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; two stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: July 17 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Miller, Mildred Ramer, 83, Haven, Kan., died Aug. 7 of pulmonary disease. Spouse: Freddie Miller. Parents: Ammon and Eva Shellenberger Ramer (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 10 at Yoder Mennonite Church, Haven.

Miller, Ralph Wesley, 76, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 5. Spouse: Mary Ellen Swartzendruber Miller. Parents: Leroy and Lydia Troyer Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Margaret Williams, Richard, Douglas; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Kalona.

Reschly, Verda Christner, 83, Wayland, Iowa, died Aug. 4 of complications of a stroke and pneumonia. Spouse: Glen Reschly (deceased). Parents: Christian and Emma Conrad Christner (deceased). Survivors: Marilyn Manley, Edwin, Daniel, Janice Miller, Steven; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Roth, Elma Dilda Stutzman, 91, Milford, Neb., died July 18. Spouse: (1st) Bert Stutzman (deceased); (2nd) Alvin Roth (deceased). Parents: James and Maude Ernst Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Dennis Stutzman, Stanley Stutzman, Roy Stutzman, Luella Schweitzer, Edna Roth, Phyllis Troyer, Lois Schweitzer, Ruth Erb; 33 grandchildren; 61 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 21 at Milford Mennonite Church.

Swartz, Martha Lydia Stemen, 83, Stuarts Draft, Va., died July 20. Spouse: John Swartz (deceased). Parents: Simeon and Mary Stemen (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Case, John, Joyce Showalter; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 24 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Swartzendruber, Grace Snyder, 91, Hesston, Kan., died July 28. Spouse: George Swartzendruber (deceased). Parents: Peter and Ida Grabill Snyder (deceased). Survivors: children Gene, Wayne, Richard, Robert, Larry, Evelyn Troyer, Virginia; 15 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at Hesston, Kan.

Uttley, Wayne Howard, 54, Elmira, Ont., died July 23 of cancer. Spouse: Marie Diefenbacher; Parents: Vernon and Mary Clemmer Uttley. Other survivors: children Barb Buehler, Steve, Richard; four grandchildren. Funeral: July 27 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Woodman, Laura, 40, Fresno, Calif., died July 9. Parent: Marie Woodman. Memorial service: July 13 at Fresno Mennonite Community Church.

Correction: Albert Smith died at the age of 76. His age was incorrect in the July 20 issue.

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- **No Longer Alone Ministries** seeks half-time ***program counselor*** working with mentally ill adults. Three-month position, may become permanent. Must be adaptable to wide range of needs and have bachelor's degree or higher. Lancaster, Pa. 717-656-7358.

- **Hesston Pharmacy** seeks full-time staff ***pharmacist*** to provide retail and nursing home services. Excellent schools, friendly central Kansas community. Competitive salary/benefits. Contact Bev at 316-327-2211; evenings 316-327-4560.

- **MAMA Project** is seeking long-term (1-3 years) bilingual ***volunteers*** to be partners in community development, nutrition and home garden promotion in Honduras. If you are interested or would like more information, call Franconia Mennonite Conference Center, 215-723-5513, or email MAMA@MRN.org

- **International Guest House,** Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a one-year ***voluntary service assignment***. For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **First Mennonite Church,** a vibrant, urban community of 40-50 in San Francisco, seeks up to a 3/4-time ***pastor.*** Emphases will be worship leading and preaching. Pastor will serve as primary congregational communication link, work with strong lay leadership, counsel when appropriate, and be involved in Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference and denominational activities. Contact Search Team, 311 Valley Street, San Francisco, CA 94131; 415-647-6293

- **Goldenrod,** a unique interdependent community being developed in the Amish countryside near Middlebury, Ind., seeks ***live-in caregiver-companions*** to provide nurturing environment in a faith community for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities. Compensation includes room, board and stipend. Opportunity to be employed at least part-time outside the home. The community will include retirees as foster grandparents, organic gardening, holistic health clinic and facilities for exercise and recreation. Contact Mennonite Disabilities Committee, 1518 College Ave., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-9720; email Menno.Dis@juno.com

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes,** a growing continuing-care retirement community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs through visitation, leading groups, and planning and leading worship services. The ability to team with other staff members and to develop linkages with homes church pastors is vital. Master's in divinity, CPE training and experience with older adults preferred. Interested individuals should fax resumes with salary requirements to 215-723-9876, attention Lisa Peirce, or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **Powhatan Mennonite Church,** a growing congregation in central Virginia with evangelical and conservative convictions, seeks a ***pastor*** with some training and experience. 804-222-4345 or hlburk@aol.com

- **Mennonite Church USA** seeks the following people:

  1. Energetic person well-versed in ***finances and development activities*** needed to serve newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This full-time executive position, to be located in Elkhart, Ind., will give oversight to former MC finances, relate to the former GC development office and begin development work on behalf of the new Executive Board. Related committee work will also be assigned.

  2. Full- or part-time two-year executive position for person in love with the church. Primary responsibility will be to tend to ***area conference relationships*** with newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This position, preferably located in Elkhart, Ind., will work to strengthen area conference relationships by attending conference meetings and planning consultations and other contacts. Heavy travel and weekend work required.

  Applicants for both positions should be able to make quick transitions, be well acquainted with the church and be eager to be part of transformation of new Mennonite Church USA. Send resumes and inquiries to George Stoltzfus, general secretary, Mennonite Church USA, 421 S. 2nd St. Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; 219-294-7131; geobs@juno.com. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

- **Mennonite Central Committee and Ten Thousand Villages** are actively recruiting for:

  Assistant retail sales manager (retail focus), Akron, Pa. Qualifications for this position include experience and/or training in retail sales; knowledge of Ten Thousand Villages products and commitment to the mission; good organizational abilities coupled with strong communication skills; ability to manage details in time-critical situations; willingness to take ownership in a project and build a team spirit with colleagues; and flexible travel schedule.

  Customer service/consignment supervisor, Akron, Pa. Qualifications for this position include good public relations skills; training and/or experience in customer service and sales; strong interpersonal relationship skills for staff supervisor, customer interaction and interaction with other Ten Thousand Villages departments; basic computer familiarity with Word Perfect experience; strong organizational skills and the ability to prioritize work; self-starter, cooperative and creative; and knowledge and support of the Ten Thousand Villages mission.

  All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. For more information on these two positions, or to receive a copy of the job descriptions, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns, Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources department, 717-859-1151; email psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time. To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237, email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **Sharing Programs,** Lancaster, Pa., is seeking full-time ***marketing manager*** to manage development of new business through structured marketing and communication plan. Requires self-directed individual with college degree or equivalent work experience, excellent communication skills, ability to work constructively within a team or group of colleagues. Adequate understanding of and experience in insurance industry desired. Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Sharing Programs,** Lancaster, Pa., is seeking two full-time ***member service representatives.*** Pennsylvania Property & Casualty Agent's License and/or college degree with solid GPA or equivalent work experience desired. Proficiency with computer keyboard, data entry, word processing; excellent communication skills; ability to learn department software and to work in cooperative team environment. Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a full-time ***senior claims representative.*** Requires college degree and/or relevant work experience in property and/or auto loss adjusting. Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

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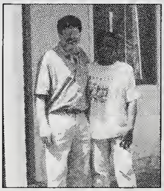

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by Rich Preheim

Raising up the dead

The cemetery is a popular place, goes the old joke; people are dying to get in. Yet on Aug. 6, one group was barred from Arlington National Cemetery.

Starting on July 4, volunteers started a 500-mile trek from Sherborn, Mass., walking a one-ton stone carved with the words, "Unknown civilians killed in war," to Arlington. For the past five years, the stone had been at the Peace Abbey, an interfaith peace center in Sherborn. The goal was to have this memorial to the unknown civilians placed in proximity to Arlington's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

"While soldiers are lauded with patriotic honors for their suffering, the recognition of civilian casualties too often gets lost in euphemistic creations like 'collateral damage,' " wrote John Grant of the Philadelphia Chapter of Veterans for Peace in the *Philadelphia Inquirer.*

Alas, the journey is incomplete. While the walkers and the stone arrived at Arlington on Aug. 6, they were not allowed in; permission for any memorial to be placed at the nation's first military cemetery requires an act of Congress. So the stone has been impounded by police while supporters lobby Congress.

'And this just in from our Heaven bureau ... '

WMDN-TV in Meridian, Miss., is in the business of communication. Since May, however, the station has been delivering a "message of a higher calling," says its general manager: WMDN is ending its 10 p.m. newscasts with a prayer. Called "Keep the Faith," the nightly 90-second segment features local clergy of different Christian denominations.

The spots were prompted by incidents of violence, from Kosovo to Littleton, says station general manager Marc Grossman. "As broadcasters, ... we have searched our souls asking ourselves what can we bring to our community ... that might lessen the chance of Meridian being the next city in the news," he tells *American Journalism Review.*

While Grossman says WMDN has not received any complaints about the prayer, some observers are critical. "It's an infringement on the rights of people who are a different religion or of no religion," says Marlene Sanders, a former ABC and CBS news correspondent and now at the Freedom Forum's Media Studies Center in New York.

"There's nothing wrong with doing religious programming," she says. "But I don't believe it belongs in news time."

Y2K watch: The healthy survivalist

If you are going to survive the cataclysm that may come Jan. 1, 2000, you might as well do so as healthily as possible. How to do that can be found in a new book, *Y2K Made Simple: A Natural Health Research Guide,* according to *ChristianWeek.* Author Ned Vankevich says his book "takes into consideration the best types of food to eat, the healthiest way to store water, the safest forms of back-up heating and electricity and the most health-promoting herbs and nutritional supplements 'just in case' the medical and health-care industries experience the Y2K-related problems many experts predict."

The bride and the bride of Christ

Courtesy of *Context,* here's a story about how the ongoing tensions surrounding women in church leadership can hit home, literally: Fred Bonham, a vicar in the Church of England, is prepared to leave his position and his church because of the anticipated ordination of a woman—his wife.

Valerie Bonham is a deacon in the Church of England and is expected to become a priest. But before that happens, her husband says, he will leave the Church of England and become a layperson in the Roman Catholic Church. In a letter to his parishioners, Fred Bonham said he is convinced that one branch of the church "has no authority to make such a fundamental change to the sacred ministry."

Making his mark

Look at what our technological wonders have wrought. Calligrapher Donald Jackson has taken on a $3 million commission to create what's believed to be the first handwritten and illuminated Bible since the advent of printing 500 years ago, reports *The Observer.*

Jackson and his team plan to combine modern computers and medieval goose quill pens to produce a 1,150-page volume with decorated pages, margin illustrations and colorful text. The project is sponsored by St. John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minn. The project deadline is 2004.

Tidbits

- Ninety-five percent of the United States' 27 million deaf people are unchurched. —*The Lutheran*
- Indonesia is home to 22 Christian universities. —*New Horizons*
- Of the 418 candidates for ordination as Catholic priests in the United States this year, 22 percent were born outside the country.—*National Catholic Reporter*
- With 450 million adherents, Pentecostalism is the fastest growing Christian movement in the world. —*Sojourners*
- There are an estimated 10,000 religious clubs in U.S. public high schools. —*Liberty*

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Gordon Houser

War of the worlds

Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.—Matthew 16:25

Jesus was in a battle between the world and God's reign. He wanted to prepare his disciples for it. But they had trouble understanding him. I'm not sure we're doing much better.

In Matthew 16:21-28, the Common Lectionary Gospel reading for Aug. 29, Jesus tells his disciples he must "go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering ... and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Peter "rebukes" Jesus, tries to set him straight. After all, as a good Jew, Peter knows that the Messiah, whom Peter just identified as Jesus in Matthew 16:16, is not going to be killed. He's going to do the killing, set things right.

Jesus turns and says to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan!" He sees that this is a temptation of the evil one, just like those he faced in the wilderness (see Matthew 4:1-11). Not only am I going to be killed, Jesus says, but if you follow me, so will you.

Jesus' call to live freely under the reign of God is revolutionary. I'm not sure we can understand this in our gut. Our brothers and sisters in Colombia and Guatemala and other parts of the globe understand it better. They know that if they speak out for Jesus' nonviolent way, their chances of being killed go up.

We are not to be training our children to be good citizens of the world but to be revolutionaries, citizens of God's reign.

Jesus knew he was in a war against "the world." That word ("kosmos" in the Greek) is used different ways in the New Testament. It may refer to the planet or all humanity, such as in John 3:16 ("God so loved the world ..."). But it often refers to the human realm that exists in estrangement from God. Walter Wink calls this "the domination system."

Jesus tells his disciples how to fight this system: "Lose your life for my sake." Later he exemplifies this teaching by giving up his life on the cross. His way of fighting is nonviolent. He overcomes this domination system by both practicing and teaching freedom.

The "world"—and much of institutional religion, for that matter—tries to control people, to bring order to things. And often those in power offer good reasons for acting this way, for dominating others so that good may come.

But Jesus' way is different. He taught that people can only live under God's reign if they are free. And freedom cannot be coerced.

In *The Other Side* (September/October), Richard Rohr offers this general rule about Jesus and religion: "Institutional religion tends to think of people as very simple. Therefore, the law must be very complex to protect people in every situation. Jesus is exactly and consistently the opposite. He treats people as very complex—different in religion, lifestyle, virtue, temperament and success—and, in order to bring them to God, keeps the law very simple."

Of course, not all organized religion is bad, but it can easily slip into a practice of dominating others, as Jesus encountered in his day. Too often it becomes either an exercise of power, of keeping people under control, or—and these often go together—a way to be comfortable, full of ourselves.

"Full of ourselves" is definitely not what Jesus is talking about when he says we must give up our life in order to gain it.

By giving up his life, Jesus became what the early church called "Christus Victor." J. Denny Weaver (page 4) argues that this is a better way to understand Jesus' death than as a payment to a vengeful God.

Jesus fought "the world," the domination system, and won. He invites us to follow him in the same way, as nonviolent warriors who give up our lives in order to gain them.

As we enter a new school year in our congregations, let us invite each other to freedom. The goal of Christian education is not to make us comfortable and keep everything tidy but to help us be free. We are not to be training our children to be good citizens of the world but to be revolutionaries, citizens of God's reign.

In our work as Sunday school teachers, pastors, mentors or editors, let us live free and call others to lose whatever comfortable, false religion the world offers and find life by following Jesus' revolutionary way.—*gh*

theMennonite

September 7, 1999

why should we integrate?

A four-part series begins
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6 The reign of God made visible in Jesus
8 Three-generation mission presence
9 The pastoral aspects of banking
16 Out of focus: the spirit of St. Louis

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Bucks and bucking trends

Thank you for Kent Davis Sensenig's "Community Economics in an Age of Globalization" (Aug. 17). Historically, Mennonites have been uncomfortable with, or even had taboos against, uses of temporal power. For many, voting and the holding of public office are still seen as incompatible with the Christian life. Yet in our times, the most significant source of earthly power is economic, and government simply serves the interests of large corporations. Church people posses an enormous amount of economic power in this world. We do indeed need to think about how we use it.

Happily, I suspect you will receive many and varied responses to Sensenig's article. This is an issue on which discussion at a churchwide level is long overdue.—*Phil Waite, Elkhart, Ind.*

May Sensenig's article serve as a wake-up call for all Mennonites. It is imperative that we again seriously engage ourselves in the basic Mennonite doctrine of economics known as "the simple life." It is so easy to get caught up in today's trappings of consumerism and forfeit the possibility of living our economics in a Christian perspective.—*Reuben Krehbiel, McPherson, Kan.*

Sensenig's article addresses issues that I believe are very important to the Mennonite church today. Globalization is an issue that Mennonites need to hear about more often. We are part of a tradition of simple living that gives us a head start toward living in a more globally conscious way. We must embrace our heritage and recognize its value while it is still a part of us instead of exchanging it for the consumeristic and destructive culture of America today.—*Tim Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.*

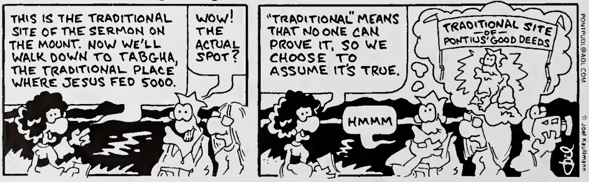
Although I agree with some of the ideas proposed in Sensenig's article, one specific needs a response. The sidebar on "Putting Communitarianism Into Practice" suggests, "Refuse to shop at national chains and conglomerates." If we take this seriously (and not even to the nth degree) it would mean:

1. Canceling our subscription to national papers such as *The Mennonite, Canadian Mennonite* and *Mennonite Weekly Review.*
2. Not attending any churchwide events, including St. Louis 99.
3. Withdrawing our support for anything the international body might attempt to do, especially Ten Thousand Villages.

Maybe I missed the meaning of conglomerate, but with the emphasis on local, it seems to me we need the vision and resources provided by wider connections and assets—especially when we are "just buying stuff." As Rene Dubos said in 1972: "Think globally. Act locally." I'd say that it is a better attitude than avoidance.—*David Hiebert, Scottdale, Pa.*

Pontius' Pilgrimage

by Joel Kauffmann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TRADITIONAL SITE —OF— PONTIUS' GOOD DEEDS
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Worship and work

I would take a more jaundiced view of worship at St. Louis 99 than was found in the Aug. 10 convention report ("Worship Draws From River of Symbols") and editorial ("When NPR and Security and Maintenance Hear Us Sing Again"). I found the worship escapist and manipulative.

Perhaps a question will clarify: Was the obsession with heaven a symbol of the location at the river, as your reports suggests? Or was it a sign of a lack of reality, our disconnectedness from life, the terrific sense of denial at work within us?

I am afraid it was the latter.

I do not know anyone who wants to go to heaven right now, yet with vehemence and surfeit the song leaders manipulated us to sing that we did. I must have entered one of the meetings a bit late as I never grasped the logic of our need to shout "yes," we'll gather at the river. I found it curious how we were in "soon, and very soon," a more recent spiritual, but one surely born out of a struggle few of us know. Despite a popular Hauerwas theology, there are not many of us ready to embrace an alien residency in our world that might have been called forth by the river theme. Witness the vote separating our countries. Instead, the unrelenting focus was on heaven, not a new Jerusalem here.

I found the Saturday evening service the low point of the convention as we prayed for the healing and release of others but ignored our own hurtful blindness, which was such a focal point of the business sessions.

theMennonite

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y readers say

Was I dreaming, or did we actually sing, "I will not be, I will not be moved" on Sunday morning? Sounds good, but that is exactly what is unhealthy in us.—*Donald R. Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.*

Worship and work sometimes seemed far distant from one another at St. Louis 99. In that regard, I am intrigued by editor Lorne Peachey's use of musical metaphors for describing the heart of such churchwide experiences.

In his July 6 editorial ("Another Defining Moment for North American Mennonites"), he remembers goose bumps at Wichita 95 while General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates sang, "Here in this place, new light is streaming" after they voted to integrate. In his Aug. 10 editorial ("When NPR and Security and Maintenance Hear Us Sing Again"), Peachey recalls the stirring experience of singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" at the final worship service at St. Louis 99 with the song nearly falling apart in the middle and coming back together again near the end —a picture of both the harmony and disharmony of the delegate sessions.

On the one hand, I'm discouraged by our seeming inability to use reason and political processes to make a way together as two denominations into the future. On the other hand, I hear our singing and know our hearts are devoted to the same God.

Should we sing more and talk less as we work together to make the necessary decisions of the next two years? What would happen if we committed ourselves to spend as much time singing and praying together as we spend in the political processes of decision making? In our current impasse, I think a new approach is worth trying.—*Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind.*

1. Why integration?

A historica

by Rachel Waltner Goossen

The historic merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC), currently under way, prompts a revisiting of our understandings of denominational traditions. Why are we integrating now, at the turn of a new century and millennium? What processes have led to this quest for unity, and why are we realigning structures that have served our congregations and communities of faith for more than 100 years? How do our current actions honor the commitments and visions of our Anabaptist and Mennonite forbears?

In August 1983, delegates of both denominations gathered at Bethlehem, Pa., for the first-ever joint conference of MCs and GCs. They acknowledged formally that "we are part of one spiritual ancestry [but] we have been separated by our cultural backgrounds and have allowed commitments to our respective structures to keep us apart."

The delegates resolved to form an inter-Mennonite committee for exploring further cooperation between congregations, among area conferences and binationally. Since that meeting, additional joint MC-GC gatherings at Normal, Ill. (in 1989), at Wichita, Kan. (in 1995), and this year at St. Louis have built on this impulse to get together. If one dates the origins of serious merger exploration to the meeting at Bethlehem, it is evident that MCs and GCs have been working at integration for the better part of two decades.

Woven through this merger story of the 1980s and '90s is the use of history to help explain Mennonites' desire for unity. For example, John E. Sharp, director of the Mennonite Church's Historical Committee and Archives, echoes arguments made by the late churchman Harold S. Bender a half-century ago when he reminds us that the telling of stories—faith journeys explored through Mennonite literature and history—constitutes integrative elements of church identity. "Let's go back to the beginning," Sharp suggests, "and explore our common roots in the 16th-century Anabaptist movement.

"We started together, and the ideal (based on discipleship, community and nonviolence), was held up of what this church could become, no matter what region Anabaptists were from. Mennonites throughout the world are still attracted to this common history and mission."

Cultural distinctiveness: Thinking historically about the two denominations, GC and MC, broadens our self-understanding. Since the Bethlehem conference in 1983, Mennonite scholars have managed to debunk at least one myth about denominational origins. Didn't the MCs and GCs split in the 19th century? No. Despite perceptions of a schismatic heritage, MC and GC traditions represent essentially separate developments, motivated more by cultural distinctiveness and settlement patterns than by theological disputes.

The GC organized in 1860 to draw together progressive groups in Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Ontario, with the hope of gathering in a much broader body of Mennonites. In the 1870s and decades following, many Mennonites newly arriving in the United States and Canada from Prussian and Russian communities opted to join the GC. MC origins predate the GC movement, since a number of eastern regional conferences, beginning with Franconia (organized in 1725), had 18th- and early 19th-century roots.

However, these regional bodies did not formally affiliate with each other until 1898, nearly 40 years after the organization of the GC.

Our denominational histories also yield surprising information about past church mergers. Isn't Mennonite history rife with examples of divisiveness? Yes, but that's only part of the story. During the past century, several smaller-scale mergers involving MCs and GCs have occurred, each with potential lessons for us as we negotiate a broader integration process.

On the MC side, one example of merger is the Indiana-Michigan Conference, the product of a union in 1916 of a regional conference of MCs and a conference composed of Amish Mennonite congregations. These two groups shared a geographic base.

Since the 1890s, they had had a mutual interest in supporting a fledgling secondary school, the Elkhart Institute, as well as its successor, Goshen College.

This is the first of four articles that will explore reasons for integrating the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. In this issue, Rachel Waltner Goossen looks at the historical reasons for integrating. In future issues Robert Kreider and John A. Lapp will look at sociological reasons; Ruth Suter will look at organizational reasons; and Ervin Stutzman will look at spiritual and biblical reasons.
—the editors

perspective

Mennonite history can be a guide rather than a stumbling block to integration.

After coordinating meetings and relating closely to each other for several decades, these Amish Mennonite and MC folk (approximately 3,300 church members from more than two dozen congregations) came together through a decisive vote for merger.

On the GC side, a significant merger took place in the mid-20th century. The Central Conference Mennonite Church, an Illinois group with Amish Mennonite origins, functioned independently from 1908 until 1945, when it became a GC district.

Twelve years later, the Central Conference merged with its GC district neighbor, the Middle Conference, forming what became known as the Central District Conference. Here, as in the earlier case of the Indiana-Michigan merger, church people of different but related cultural backgrounds came together into a single regional entity.

A more recent example is the 1986 formation of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, established by one GC and two MC regional conferences in Ontario and Quebec. In this Canadian context, an extensive history of cooperation—in relief efforts to the Ukraine and Europe, mutual aid, church planting and the founding of Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.—preceded integration. The Eastern Canada example reminds us that cooperative ventures, particularly in wartime and other times of stress, have helped sustain smaller bodies of Mennonites.

From World War II alternative service to Mennonite World Conference, joint efforts across denominational fault lines have been a hallmark of 20th-century Mennonite experience.

Common values: Mennonite Central Committee, with constituent bodies that include nearly all Mennonite and Amish groups, is the best-known and most far-reaching of all 20th-century collaborative enterprises. While on service assignments across North America and other continents, GCs and MCs have become personally acquainted with each other, recognizing common values and faith commitments. Is it possible to imagine MC-GC integration, as it is now proceeding, absent the stimuli provided by Mennonite Central Committee during the past eight decades? In MCC we find scores of stories about Mennonite peoplehood, representing layer upon layer of imaginative vision for Christian unity.

Surveying the Mennonite landscape over the 20th century, we see precedent-setting mergers of regional groups as well as inter-Mennonite cooperation among the denominations' schools. Two seminaries, Goshen Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary, became associated in 1958 and merged as Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., three decades later. There also has been significant momentum toward unity at the grass roots: within congregations. Dual-conference (MC-GC) congregations first emerged in the early 1960s. Many are urban churches, located in settings where ministry and church-planting efforts require the sharing of financial resources and personnel. In recent years, Mennonites in some rural settings have also joined the growing number of dual-affiliated congregations.

The practical arrangements forged and tested by dual-conference congregations demonstrate how integration is already working. Those who already identify themselves as both MC and GC look forward to a new day when such labels will give way to a broader, more inclusive identity.

Historical sensibility adds weight to the impulse for church unity. Over time, MC and GC traditions have evolved in ways that have brought us closer together in areas of church governance. As we seek to work through complex decisions about membership and authority, we ought to be regarding Mennonite history as a guide rather than a stumbling block. For whether our personal allegiances have been MC, GC or both, among the most abiding markers of our past have been those that have drawn diverse elements together. Faithfulness to church tradition includes, even demands, attentiveness and openness to change.

Rachel Waltner Goossen has taught history at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Goshen (Ind.) College and now teaches at the University of Kansas. She lives in Topeka, Kan.

From World War II alternative service to Mennonite World Conference, joint efforts across denominational fault lines have been a hallmark of 20th-century Mennonite experience.

Implications for Mennonites of a conversation between black theology and Mennonite theology

The reign of God made visible in Jesus

Part 2: black theology

by J. Denny Weaver

Part 1 analyzed classic christological and atonement images and suggested some alternatives. I had an early version of the conclusions in mind before I encountered black theology in a systematic way. These conclusions made it a startling experience to read *God of the Oppressed* (Orbis, rev. ed. 1997), written by James H. Cone, the founder of black theology. In some form, every point in Part 1 about a theology for Mennonites is also identifiable in the development of Cone's theology.

African-Americans have occupied a marginal position in North America: brought involuntarily, forced into slavery and still discriminated against by white society after the Civil War supposedly resolved the slavery problem. That marginal social position gave African-Americans a different view of classic theology.

Slaves did not accept Christianity outright from their owners. When the owners read the Bible aloud, they stressed, "Slaves obey your masters" (Ephesians 6:5), and linked heaven to that obedience. The owners depicted Jesus as a spiritual savior who delivered people from sin and guilt but said nothing about conditions in this world. This spiritual salvation did not challenge the master-slave relationship.

But slaves heard something else when the Bible was read. The Exodus story placed God squarely on the side of slaves. The story thus promised that one day God would free the slaves in America. Slaves saw Jesus as a liberator, whose salvation included freedom from slavery and, later, support in the struggle against segregation and racism in post-slavery America.

Slave owners depicted Jesus as a spiritual savior who delivered people from sin and guilt but said nothing about conditions in this world. Slaves saw Jesus as a liberator, whose salvation included freedom from slavery.

In Cone's analysis, the white reading of the Bible rested on the christological formulas of Nicaea and Chalcedon and Anselm's satisfaction atonement. In themselves, Nicene-Chalcedonian categories of "humanity" and "deity" lacked an explicit ethical content, which reflects their position in the church that was growing in favor with the Roman state.

Cone writes: "Few, if any, of the early church fathers grounded their christological arguments in the concrete history of Jesus of Nazareth. Consequently, little is said about the significance of his ministry to the poor as a definition of his person. The Nicene Fathers showed little interest in the christological significance of Jesus' deeds for the humiliated, because most of the discussion took place in the social context of the church's position as the favored religion of the Roman state."

White theologians could thus claim Jesus as defined by Nicaea and Chalcedon but still own slaves and later enforce racial discrimination and segregation.

Cone emphasized that reconciliation is "primarily an act of God." It is not a mere inward state or a mystical transaction. It happens "in history." It produces "a new relationship with people created by God's concrete involvement in the political affairs of the world," whether biblical Israel or oppressed peoples today.

God's liberating acts: The link between liberation and reconciliation provides the basis for Cone's critique of classic atonement concepts. This link has been cut for most of Christian history, Cone said, in large part because the post-Constantinian church "produced a 'gospel' that was politically meaningless for the oppressed." Reconciliation was separated from God's liberating acts in history, and definitions of atonement developed "that favored the powerful and excluded the interests of the poor."

Cone applied the critique specifically to Anselm's satisfaction theory, which Cone called "a neat rational theory but useless as leverage against political oppression. It dehistoricizes the work of Christ, separating it from God's liberating act in history."

Cone's reconstruction of an atonement motif anchored in the concrete reality of history builds in "Christus Victor." Cone noted that Christus Victor focused on the "objective reality of reconciliation as defined by God's victory over Satan and his powers." Included among the powers confronted by the resurrected Christ are not only the powers of evil mythically expressed in the figure of Satan but such earthly realities as "the American system," symbolized by government officials who "oppress the poor, humiliate the weak and make heroes out of rich capitalists"; the Pentagon and the justice system, which treats African-Americans so differently from whites.

James Cone and I come from different marginal American backgrounds. But those marginal starting points produced remarkably similar critiques of the classic formulas for Christology and atonement. The difference was that where I noted that the formulas accommodated the violence of the sword, Cone described

CLEO Photography

their accommodation of the violence of racism and slavery. And each of us built alternatives that appealed to the details of the story of Jesus and used a restructured version of the Christus Victor atonement idea.

These parallel and intersecting theological concepts suggest some important truths for the future of the new Mennonite Church.

Black theology emerged in the 1960s as a response to black militants who rejected Christianity entirely as the oppressive religion of white people. And it challenged the black church, which too willingly accepted the white gospel that supported the continued marginalization of African-Americans.

But black theology also challenges white Christians—including white Mennonites—to re-examine their attitudes and their theology. I suggest six implications this conversation with black theology might have for Mennonites.

1. We should discard the idea that the formulas of Nicene and Chalcedonian Christology and Anselmian atonement constitute a standard theological program every theology should build on. These formulas have a particular history and social context just as surely as black or Mennonite theology. The peace church is free to read the Bible afresh and to develop new images that better articulate the peaceful and just reign of God made visible in the story of Jesus.

2. Some Mennonite theologians advocate building theology for Mennonites on Christendom's formulas. But if those formulas were the best foundation for a theology of peace and justice, then most Western Christians would already be pacifists, and Christians would not have defended slavery and racism.

3. Black theology provides a necessary reminder for contemporary Mennonites that the gospel has social dimensions. If Mennonites now need to have peace ambassadors to remind us to keep peace and evangelism together, the strong implication is that we already have a truncated gospel.

4. The conversation with black theology shows that the question of violence is not limited to pacifism and refusal of military violence. Slavery, racism and white superiority are forms of violence just as surely as violence with guns. So are poverty, male dominance and patriarchy. Concern about violence must encompass a wider range of justice issues than has been the case in the Mennonite past. In particular, Mennonites need to confess the extent to which our theology has been silent about racism and has thus contributed to the assumption of white superiority that permeates U.S. society.

5. Recognizing the need to confront systemic violence such as racism makes painfully clear why the principle of nonresistance is now an inadequate peace stance. Nonresistance has meaning when it constitutes a refusal to reply to evil with another evil act. It means little, however, in the face of systemic violence such as racism or poverty, when not resisting is to accept the systemic violence of the status quo. To resist systemic violence may require active nonviolent resistance. The church founded on Jesus Christ, who makes visible the reign of God in history, should be the locus of such nonviolent social change. If the church is not confronting injustice, then it is not being the church.

In the face of systemic violence such as racism or poverty, not resisting is to accept the systemic violence of the status quo. To resist systemic violence may require active nonviolent resistance. If the church is not confronting injustice, then it is not being the church.

6. Black theology and a theology for the peace church are not identical or even in agreement on all major points. Their conversation will be a dialogue, and sometimes an argument, among brothers and sisters. Some disagreements will concern the use of violence. And further analysis may reveal that James Cone's understanding of the relationship of the church (as faith community) to oppressed social groups opens the door to another version of the Constantinian temptation that his theological analysis challenges so effectively.

A more profitable and mutually enriching discussion might develop around analyzing together the various forms of violence and oppression we encounter in the world, then together developing appropriate ways to resist the violence and work toward liberation.

If the peace church is truly the peace church, what Western Christendom has considered marginal is really integral to our understanding of Jesus Christ. The same is true for African-Americans and black theology.

J. Denny Weaver is chair of the department of history and religion at Bluffton (Ohio) College, where he teaches courses in theology and ethics. This essay is a revised version of "Confessing Jesus Christ from the 'Margins,'" Direction *(Spring 1998).*

Indiana women join new Senegal project to create three-generation mission presence

ELKHART, Ind.—Irene Bornman prayed that all her children would one day become missionaries or pastors. At the time, she didn't believe a calling to mission could be part of her own future.

But on Aug. 15, the Goshen, Ind., woman began a three-year assignment, creating a three-generation mission presence among the Wolof people of Senegal. The team includes two of her five adult children and three of her grandchildren.

Irene, her daughter Sarah and her son, Jonathan, serve with Wolof Partnership, a joint ministry of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and Friends of the Wolof, a Goshen-based network of congregations, businesses and individuals.

Even as a girl, Irene knew she wanted to serve as a mission worker someday. As an adult, she sought confirmation of a call to mission through ministering to her neighbors and co-workers. She came to an important realization: "Before God can use me in another country, God has to use me here," she says.

Irene's calling to serve the Wolof people began more than two years ago as an interest in her son's plans. "When Jonathan received a call to [serve] the Wolof, I began listening closely," she says.

After participating in an exploration trip to Senegal in 1997, Irene felt called to live among the Wolof people. "When I came home from that trip, I caught myself saying, 'When we go back,' " she says, even though there had been no decision at that point to send a team.

Jonathan and his wife, Carol, went to Senegal in June as team leaders.

Irene, a nurse and seamstress by trade, says her primary goal for the first year in Senegal is to make significant progress in learning the Wolof language so that she can begin to communicate with Wolof women. Her second goal, she says, is to serve as a grandmother for the nine children on the Senegal team, including Jonathan and Carol's daughter, Laurel, age 4, and sons Isaiah, 6, and Caleb, nearly 2.

Also going to Senegal is Irene's daughter Sarah, who graduated from Goshen High School in June. Her primary responsibility for the one-year assignment will be supervising the children while the adults study language.

For Sarah, the assignment is a way to explore a longer-term calling to mission. Participating on a team that includes family members and friends from church, she says, "is a safe way to try out if this is really what I want to do."

At the same time, though, the decision to join the team was her own. "I decided I was going before [my mom] did," Sarah says.

Irene says she sometimes hears people talk in terms of the "sacrifice" of leaving everything behind to go into service, but she doesn't see it that way. "It's not a sacrifice; it's a privilege," she says. "The God of the universe has a place for me. … Why would I hang on to my house and job when I have the privilege of working for God?"

The Wolof people make up more than one-third of Senegal's population. Their culture has embraced Islam since the 10th century. There are only a few Christians among the Wolof, despite a century of Christian mission work.

—Bethany Swope for AIMM and MBM news services

It's not a sacrifice; it's a privilege.

—Irene Bornman

Larry Bartel

Movers and shakers

Hesston (Kan.) College sophomores Jason Schmidt from Jamestown, N.D. (center), and Jon Graber from Crawfordsville, Iowa (right), help Jenn Kisch, a sophomore from North Plainfield, N.J., move her belongings across campus and into Hesston's Erb Hall dormitory on Aug. 20. Hesston's classes started Aug. 23, the first of the five U.S. Mennonite colleges to begin the 1999-2000 academic year.

The pastoral aspects of banking

Kansas man brings compassion to hard-line business

ROXBURY, Kan.—Lowell Peachey's favorite banker joke is the one about the banker with a glass eye: How can you tell which eye is glass? It's the one with a glimmer of compassion.

Being a banker himself, Peachey can get away with telling the joke. Besides, he knows the stereotype isn't true.

For Peachey, banking is an arena for Christian discipleship. In addition to the obvious role of helping communities build a sound economic footing, he has found that bankers can even, on occasion, be like pastors.

Peachey, a native of Harrisonburg, Va., got into banking after marrying Rita, his wife, and moving to the Kalona, Iowa, area. While there, he applied for a Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) position in Haiti.

"The ad said they needed a banker who spoke French and had international management experience," Peachey says. "I was a banker, so I had one of the three."

That was apparently enough. Peachey got the job and in 1990 moved to Haiti with his family to direct MEDA's Small Business Development Program. After only nine months, however, a military coup forced the evacuation of all MEDA's expatriate staff. Peachey spent the next nine months back in the United States, where MEDA utilized his banking expertise in other areas of its international program. When the situation in Haiti stabilized, he returned to serve out his term as MEDA's country manager until the end of 1993.

About this time, in what Peachey describes as an act of Providence, a friend told him about a bank position that was open in Roxbury, near the Mennonite communities of south-central Kansas. Peachey applied for and landed the job of president and CEO of the Roxbury Bank.

Roxbury is a hamlet of less than 100 people surrounded by sprawling fields of wheat and milo. The bank's owners gave Peachey enough freedom to try new things. And they seemed to have worked. Despite the small population base, Roxbury Bank has doubled its staff from five to 10 in the 5½ years since Peachey arrived. Assets have soared from $7 million to $19 million. And, to turn rural-urban drift on its head, the small-town bank has a branch office in Overland Park, a thriving suburb of Kansas City, Kan.

Peachey, now a MEDA board member, sees some similarities between Roxbury Bank and his MEDA experience.

"One of the cornerstones of the Small Business Development Program in Haiti was the one-on-one personal relationship between credit officer and client," he says. "In our industry, with all the consolidations and banks gobbling up each other, more and more there is getting to be a niche for community banks that have a personal relationship and who care about their customers and their customers' success.

"A lot of our customers still want somebody who knows their business, knows who they are when they come in and asks them how their family is. For community banks, that's one of the ways we differentiate ourselves."

Lowell Peachey

That can lead to what Peachey regards as a pastoral role. "Over the 15 years I've been in banking, I've often discussed with customers personal problems they probably would not discuss with their pastor," he says. "A lot of times people's personal problems affect their finances. So you end up talking about a lot of different things, from marriage problems to wild kids to catastrophic illness.

"I've had opportunity to provide pastoral counseling and even to talk theology."

Sometimes Peachey understands things a pastor doesn't. Such as the client who had started his own business and was surprised and resentful that people in his own church wouldn't deal with him.

"The attitude in his church seemed to be that it was OK to make money as a dirt farmer but not as a merchandiser," Peachey says. "I've heard that kind of thing said over and over again."

As a banker, Peachey also has to know when to say no. When he lived in Iowa, he would periodically field requests from people in dire straits, such as wanting to borrow money for groceries. Peachey would put them in touch with the local ministerial association.

Nevertheless, he admits to having made loans from the heart. He hasn't often been stung. "In most cases, it's created more work," Peachey says, "because it means extra effort holding their hands while you wait to collect."

In both his banking and MEDA activities, he sees his role as helping build businesses and helping people build better lives. "That's what I do here," Peachey says, "and I'm glad to be a part of extending that through the larger ministry of the church."—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

You scream, I scream, we all scream for . . .

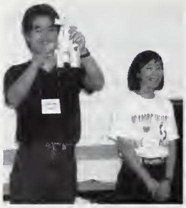
The sales plan no doubt runs counter to conventional wisdom: Only homemade vanilla ice cream. No other flavors. No toppings.

But since its beginnings in 1970, the stand—operated by the youth group from Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.—has become a successful fixture at the Turner County Fair.

The tradition continued at last month's fair as the group made and sold more than 900 gallons of ice cream, raising about $12,500. No tally was kept on the number of customers, but the stand went through nearly 10,000 plastic spoons.

Money from the ice cream stand has gone to a variety of projects, from funding youth group service projects and St. Louis 99 youth convention attendance to support for congregational service workers to a new water fountain in the church and carpeting for the parsonage.—*Freeman* (S.D.) *Courier*

Hong Kong Mennonites tell of importance of partnership, God's leading in their ministries



GCMC photo

Hong Kong Mennonite leaders Simon SzeDu (left) and Iris Luk make a presentation at July's overseas mission seminar for Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Mission workers. The seminar was held at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill.—With only three congregations and less than 100 members, the Conference of Mennonite Churches in Hong Kong would hardly seem to be a force for spreading the gospel in southeast Asia.

"It's hard to maintain energy, resources and finances on our own," admits conference executive secretary Iris Luk.

But the Hong Kong conference has joined other Mennonite groups to offer hope for the future of Mennonite mission work in the region. For example, Hong Kong and Filipino Mennonites are cooperating in the support of a Filipino woman who works with domestic helpers on the Hong Kong island of Cheung Chao.

Simon SzeDu, co-pastor of Hong Kong's Hope Mennonite Church, has made several trips to Daming, China. He recently helped the congregation there, which has Mennonite roots, set up computers donated by Hong Kong Mennonites.

"I never thought the Hong Kong conference could do anything like this because we're so small," Luk says. "But God provides for the ministry."

God also provides for the ministers. Luk and SzeDu point to God's intercession as pivotal in their becoming church workers. They spent four weeks in the United States this summer as guests of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Luk was a student at the University of Saskatchewan when she met David Chiu, then pastor of Chinese Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. After a year attending the congregation, she became a Christian.

"After I finished my degree, David asked me if I would consider going to seminary and becoming a full-time servant of God," Luk says. "I wasn't sure I was ready for full-time, but he reminded me about Jesus' call in the Great Commission."

Soon afterward, she unexpectedly received an extension on her student visa, which allowed her time to apply to seminary. Then she approached her older brother, who lived in Chicago and was not a Christian, about paying her way through seminary.

"When he agreed to do it, I knew this was a sign from God," Luk says.

After receiving her degree from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon in 1991, she returned to Hong Kong, where she opted to become a merchandiser rather than a church worker.

"I did this for six years and then began to tire of it," Luk says. "Finally I asked God, 'What do you want me to be?' "

That's when Commission on Overseas Mission workers Tim and Suanne Sprunger left Hong Kong. The conference chose Luk as its first full-time administrator.

SzeDu was working at Hang-fook, a Christian ministry to drug addicts in Hong Kong, when he met Tim Sprunger. "Tim was like a father who brought me up and discipled me," he says.

Later, SzeDu was working in a hotel and studying hotel management when, in 1994, he started reconsidering his occupational goals.

"I was 26 years old, and I wondered, 'Did I want to live the rest of my life in a hotel?' " he says. "I liked my job, but I was looking for something more.

"I asked Tim, and he said, 'What about seminary?' I prayed to God. I said I would take the first step and resign from my job and enroll in the seminary. But I was the only breadwinner for my family, and I'd take three months, and if nothing worked out, I would have to [go back to work]."

Two weeks after starting classes at the China Graduate School of Theology, SzeDu was notified that he had received government housing. He had applied five years earlier, and it normally takes 10 years to get in. With the subsequent cut in rent, SzeDu was able to complete his seminary degree.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Join a conversation about the past, present and future of Anabaptist/Mennonite families and congregational life at a low-cost conference hosted by Goshen College, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Historical Society.

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AIDS epidemic shapes life and ministry of Botswana workers

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill.—When they left for Botswana in 1996 with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Rudy and Sharon Dirks knew they were going as teachers. What they didn't know was how the AIDS epidemic, expanding in sub-Saharan Africa at a horrifying rate, would end up affecting everything they do.

"It has shaped how we've developed our work and how we've learned the language and culture in Botswana," says Rudy, who teaches Bible and leadership to leaders of African Independent Churches (AIC).

In fact, the crisis has touched the family's life directly. Two close friends, a woman and a man, show signs of being infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The woman refuses to be tested for HIV.

Dealing with someone who is in the house regularly is a challenge, Sharon says, balancing Jesus' call to be with the sick while addressing legitimate fears for her family's health and safety. The Dirkses have three children.

"For me, [dealing with AIDS] has involved more hands-on care, such as having to get medical attention for [the workers] when there are health crises," says Sharon, who teaches English and religion in an adult education center. "I've had to spend a lot more time on this than I expected."

The epidemic also affects Rudy's work. "It's very wearing when every week someone else in our circle of acquaintances—[AIC] colleagues, church leaders and their families—experiences death because of AIDS," he says.

AIC practice requires several days of mourning following a death, including an hour of prayer every evening between death and burial, an all-night wake right before the funeral and a funeral service that will last at least half a day.

Even if the Dirkses don't attend all the funerals, they cut into the time for teaching and other work with AICs and church leaders. "It's physically draining and exhausting," Rudy says.

The AIDS crisis has prompted him to put more time into developing a dream he has had since coming to Botswana: starting a marriage and family ministry among AICs. "I'd like to develop teaching material that deals with male-female relationships and healthy relationships within marriage and the family," Rudy says.

The Dirkses returned to Botswana on Aug. 29 after being on a North American assignment since April.—*Melanie Zuercher for AIMM, GCMC and MCC news services*

MCC photo by Carmen Pauls

Boxed in

Workers at the Baghdad, Iraq, warehouse of the Middle East Council of Churches prepare a delivery for victims of U.S.-British air strikes in Iraq's southern no-fly zone. Following July 18 bombings near Najaf, which killed 14 civilians and wounded 18, 16 bags of flour and five bags of beans from Mennonite Central Committee were included with the medical supplies and bedding delivered to victims by the MECC. Air strikes are an almost daily occurrence, reports Carmen Pauls, MCC worker in Iraq. Since the Najaf bombing, 18 more people have been killed and 54 wounded in similar attacks. U.S. and British planes patrol Iraqi airspace north of the 36th parallel and south of the 33rd parallel with the stated purposed of protecting Kurdish and Shiite Muslim minorities.

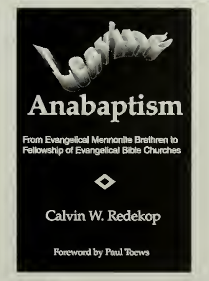
Ex-MCCer takes conflict to software

Ernest Thiessen had left Nepal as a frustrated and disappointed Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker. Thus was the genesis of a computerized pursuit of peace.

Thiessen had suffered through disagreements about an unconventional irrigation system in Nepal. Back in North America, he turned that experience into a doctorate and developed a software program to negotiate conflicted situations.

Called One Accord, the software can handle an unlimited number of complex issues and manage the confidential data of any number of people.

Thiessen, now of Abbotsford, B.C., is looking for investors. He has already turned down a $2 million offer from a New York bank to buy the rights to the program.—*Canadian Mennonite*


Leaving
Anabaptism
From Evangelical Mennonite Brethren to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches
◆
Calvin W. Redekop
Foreword by Paul Toews

Pandora Press U.S. Book News

Leaving Anabaptism

From Evangelical Mennonite Brethren to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches

Calvin W. Redekop

Here is a key resource for Anabaptist groups debating whether to drop the name *Anabaptist* or *Mennonite*. As Katie Funk Wiebe notes, this book is "A challenge to church bodies that feel rejection of Anabaptist-Mennonite teachings is essential for growth."

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AMBS receives 10-year accreditation renewal

ELKHART, Ind.—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart has been granted continuing accreditation for 10 years from both the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

The reaccreditation highlighted as school strengths AMBS's mission, centrality of preparing church leaders in the Anabaptist tradition, concerted attention to financial development and a well-maintained campus.

But three areas were also underscored as needing more attention: the school's fiscal health because of integration and dependency on annual giving, a plan for enrollment management and more uniform attention to student advisement and assessment.

MCC U.S. joins food distribution organization

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee U.S. has found a new way to be in the relief business. The agency has joined the Food Resource Bank, a fledgling nongovernmental organization committed to ensuring food as a basic human right, according to Vern Preheim, MCC U.S. liaison to FRB.

"Our joining is an encouragement to those organizing FRB," says Preheim, MCC Central States resource development coordinator. "And we're lending expertise and experience in the use of food grains, relief and working at food security and development."

MCC U.S. is the 13th member to join FRB, a U.S. equivalent to Canadian Foodgrains Bank, of which MCC is a member. Other FRB members include the United Methodist Committee on Relief, Church World Service and the Nazarene and Christian Reformed churches. FRB has already arranged grain shipments to Ukraine and Brazil.

Members may eventually be able to draw on FRB for their own relief distribution.—*MCC News Service*

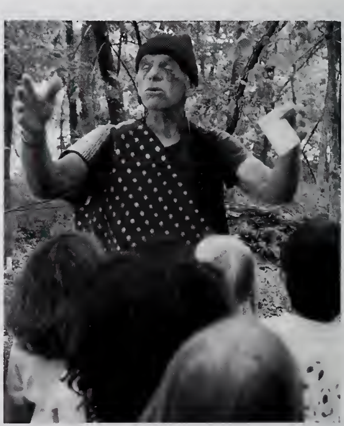
Book celebrating 'work week of God' honored

WINNIPEG—A collection of 52 reflections on "the work week of God" written by a Mennonite Economic Development Associates staff member has been honored by a media organization.

God's Week Has Seven Days by Wally Kroeker, published by Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., received an Award of Merit from Excellence in Media, which each year recognizes movies, TV and radio programs, publications and other forms of media that "create a work that is identified with excellence and is a positive contribution to our society."—*MEDA News Service*

by the way ...

St. Louis 99 organizers spent $12,000 on a citywide media blitz for the convention, including a billboard on Interstate 70, 56 posters in Metro train cars, radio and TV commercials and newspaper advertisements.—*MBM News Service*



Sight for sore eyes

Children from Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., meet blind Bartimaeus (Dan Bender) during a one-day vacation Bible school hosted by the congregation on Aug. 15. In addition to watching Jesus heal Bartimaeus, the children saw the healing of Jairus' daughter, hunted for lost sheep, found Zacchaeus up a tree, attended the wedding at Cana and took part in other biblical stories.

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Births

Brubaker, Maxwell Hunter, Aug. 16, to Jodie (Rohrer) and Randy Brubaker, Manheim, Pa.
Harshbarger, Joe Timothy, July 27, to Chad and Denise (Beyeler) Harshbarger, Fort Wayne, Ind.
Heisey, Sarah Aiqiong, Dec. 29, 1998, received for adoption August 1999, by Heather and Leon Heisey, Elizabethtown, Pa.
Hostetler, Sara Jean, July 20, received for adoption July 21, by Beth (Yoder) and Keith Hostetler, Kansas.
Huxman, Ryan Christopher, June 29, to Chris and DeAnn Huxman, Newton, Kan.
Joireman, Corinne Grace, Aug 7, to Paul and Sandra (Fullerton) Joireman, Olean, N.Y.
Lantz, Trey Michael, Aug. 6, to Kelly (Short) and Scott Lantz, Archbold, Ohio.
LeVan, William Ely, July 2, to David and Karen (Sheriff) LeVan, Oklahoma City.
Schrock, Courtney Lynne, July 16, to Don and Marlene (Miller) Schrock, Goshen, Ind.
Suloway-Baker, Asher William, July 28, 1999, received for adoption July 29, by Tim Baker and Ann Suloway, Bellingham, Wash.
Taylor, Kaemon Lee, Aug. 17, to Nathaniel and Rebecca (Nissley) Taylor, Lancaster, Pa.
Voth, Dawson Tobe, Aug. 13, to Dawn (Glaser) and Mike Voth, Topeka, Kan.
Waidelich, Tessa Johnae Guodanni, Nov. 13, 1998, received for adoption Aug. 6, 1999, by John and Sherri (Sauder) Waidelich, Wauseon, Ohio.

Marriages

Arn/Hosgood: Kendra Arn, Lansdale, Pa., and Christian Hosgood, Lansdale, Aug. 14 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.
Bercher/Froese: Chris Bercher, Fort Smith, Ark., and Christy Froese, Inola, Okla., Aug. 7 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.
Crawford/Pretzer: Dan Crawford, Beatrice, Neb., and Lori Pretzer, Diller, Neb., July 3 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.
Cressman/Wilson: Ken Cressman, Drayton, Ont., and Jacqui Wilson, Drayton, Aug. 14 at Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton.
Endres/Epp: Steven (Palmer Jr.) Endres, South Haven, Kan., and Amy Epp, Wichita, Kan., July 10 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Fretz/Rehak: Ruth Fretz, Lansdale, Pa., and Bill Rehak, Lansdale, Aug. 7 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.
Friesen/Ratzlaff: Evan Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Kristen Ratzlaff, Henderson, Aug. 14 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Friesen/Schwenk: Stanley Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Cynthia Schwenk, Henderson, Aug. 14 at Henderson.
Geiser/Nissley: Gladys Geiser, Goshen, Ind., and Lloyd Nissley, Nappanee, Ind., July 3 at Greencroft Senior Center, Goshen.
Gerber/Springer: Shawn Gerber, North Canton, Ohio, and Rachel Springer, Carlisle, Pa., Aug. 7 at Corry, Pa.
Hershberger/Yoder: Sue Hershberger, Portland, Ore., and Jon Yoder, Portland, July 3 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.
Janzen/Siebert: Katherine Janzen, Henderson, Neb., and Marvin Siebert, Henderson, Aug. 14 at Henderson.
Jones/Streeval: Heather Jones, LaGrange, Ind., and Jason Streeval, Indianapolis, Aug. 7 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.
Lacefield/Temple: Martha Lacefield, Hopedale, Ill., and Ben Temple, Greenville, S.C., June 26 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.
Miller/Robinson: Charles Miller, Uniontown, Ohio, and Amanda Robinson, Canal Fulton, Ohio, July 10 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, Ohio.
Schrock/Yoder: Jon Schrock, Goshen, Ind., and Amanda Yoder, Goshen, July 31 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Deaths

Beachy, Vera Clouse, 85, Rockford, Ill., died July 12. Spouse: Alvin Beachy (deceased). Parents: Charles and Hazel Stump Clouse (deceased). Survivors: children Brenda Ray, Debra; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: July 15 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Brenneman, Willard, 79, Wellman, Iowa, died Aug. 12 from a tractor accident. Spouse: Ruth Marner Brenneman. Parents: Emery and Alice Bender Brenneman (deceased). Other survivors: children Duane, Donald, Kathleen Schlabach, Karol, Loren; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Wellman Mennonite Church.
Brubacher, Clara Hirschler, 102, North Newton, Kan., died Aug. 14. Spouse: August John Brubacher (deceased). Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Ewy Hirschler (deceased). Survivors: children Edward, Naomi Krehbiel, Ruth Ann Dirks, Kathryn Stucky, Donald, Arlo, Yvonne Dalke; 16 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; eight great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 17 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.
Froese, Bertha Neufeld, 82, Inman, Kan., died Aug. 14. Spouse: Clarence Froese. Parents, Abraham and Anna Pauls Neufeld (deceased). Other survivors: children Donna Fry, Sarah Huggins, Clareen Beth Wenzel, Cheryl Flaming. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.
Funk, Waldo Taft, 90, Inola, Okla., died July 10. Spouse: Agathe Froese Funk. Parents: Abraham and Anna Funk (deceased). Other survivors: children Joann Unruh, Janice Jantz; three grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.
Hershberger, Keith, 59, Cleveland, died July 20 of a heart attack. Parents: Clyde and Elva Flinner Hershberger (deceased). Survivor: sister Sandra Hofstetter. Funeral: July 25 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Jones, Rex, 17, Carrollton, Mich., died Aug. 10 of leukemia. Parents: Rex and Kristie Jones. Other survivors: sisters and brother Nicole, Andrea, Jamaar. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Ninth Street Mennonite Church, Saginaw, Mich.
Kandel, Edna Mast, 79, Dalton, Ohio, died Aug. 8 of a stroke. Spouse: Eli Kandel (deceased). Parents: Joe and Mary Hochstetler Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Arlene Brubaker, LeRoy, Marvin, Patricia Phillips, Mary Lehman, Norman; 17 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 12 at East Union Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.
Miller, Raymond, 71, Orrville, Ohio, died July 31. Spouse: Martha Koppes Miller. Parents: Jacob and Ada Herr Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Willie, Roger, Nancy Hostetler, Karen Graybill; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Orrville Mennonite Church.
Miller, Sanford, 83, Hesston, Kan., died July 14. Spouse: Berta Irene Selzer Miller. Parents: Enos and Ursula Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Stanley, Barbara Callahan, Rebecca Frederick, Stephen; 11 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: July 17 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Mishler, Erdine Hostetler Horrisberger, 83, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Aug. 6. Spouse: (1st) Roger Horrisberger (deceased); (2nd) Howard Mishler (deceased). Parents: John and Mattie Mast Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children Philip Horrisberger, William Horrisberger, William Mishler, Ronald Mishler, Duane Mishler, Kathy Yoder, Doris Nussbaum; 16 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

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- **First Mennonite Church,** Newton, Kan., seeks an ***associate pastor*** with assignment in outreach ministries and Christian nurture support. Important characteristics include outgoing personality, faith-sharing passion, developing ministries out into the community, Anabaptist conviction.

  Contact Ron Ratzlaff, search committee chair, 3002 Wildwood Ct., North Newton, KS 67117; 316-284-2566.

- **Visiting Orlando?** 5 minutes from Epcot: ***private Mennonite-owned 2-bedroom home.*** Smoke-free; safe, quiet neighborhood. $750/wk, 25% to be donated to a charity of your choice. Call 1-800-999-2701.

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has opportunities for ***youth to retirees*** to serve overseas for a year or more in one of the following: leadership development among the Maasai in Kenya; conflict resolution, peace and justice training in Djibouti; church planting/community development in Cambodia; finance directors for Lithuania and Mongolia; church planting in Albania; and agricultural development in Mongolia.

  To find out more about these, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time.

  To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237, email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***director of development.*** Responsibilities include planning and implementing fund-raising activities, including annual appeals, planned giving, capital campaigns and special events. Prefer candidate with at least 2 years experience in fund raising, a bachelor's degree, effective communication skills, and an understanding of and appreciation for the Mennonite faith.

  Apply with Human Resources, Landis Homes Retirement Community, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Sharing Programs** has a job opening for a full-time senior ***claims representative.*** Requires college degree and/or relevant work experience in property and/or auto loss adjusting.

  Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Sharing Programs,** Lancaster, Pa., is seeking two full-time ***member service representatives.*** PA Property & Casualty Agent's License and/or college degree with solid GPA or equivalent work experience desired. Proficiency with computer keyboard, data entry, word processing; excellent communication skills; ability to learn department software and to work in cooperative team environment.

  Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Sharing Programs,** Lancaster, Pa., is seeking full-time ***marketing manager*** to manage development of new business through structured marketing and communication plan. Requires self-directed individual with college degree or equivalent work experience, excellent communication skills, ability to work constructively within a team or group of colleagues. Adequate understanding of and experience in insurance industry desired.

  Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367.

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes,** a growing continuing-care retirement community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs through visitation, leading groups, and planning and leading worship services. The ability to team with other staff members and to develop linkages with homes church pastors is vital. Master's in divinity, CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resumes with salary requirements to 215-723-9876, attention Lisa Peirce, or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **Powhatan Mennonite Church,** a growing congregation in central Virginia with evangelical and conservative convictions, seeks a ***pastor*** with some training and experience. 804-222-4345 or hlburk@aol.com

- **Hesston College** invites applications for the position of ***associate director of development.*** Qualifications: responsibility, integrity, ability to work independently, excellent communication skills and understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite church, Hesston College and Mennonite higher education. The associate director of development cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements Annual Fund strategies, coordinates donor programs and manages development office efforts in her or his assigned region.

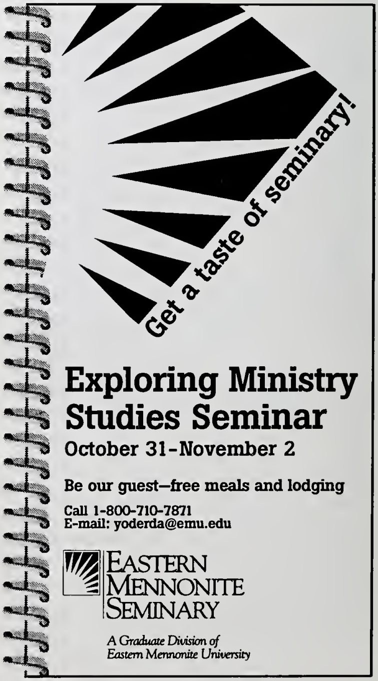
  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, director of development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8149 or email elamp@hesston.edu

- **Mennonite Church USA** seeks the following people:

  1. Energetic person well-versed in ***finances and development activities*** needed to serve newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This full-time executive position, to be located in Elkhart, Ind., will give oversight to former MC finances, relate to the former GC development office and begin development work on behalf of the new Executive Board. Related committee work will also be assigned.

  2. Full- or part-time two-year executive position for person in love with the church. Primary responsibility will be to tend to ***area conference relationships*** with newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This position, preferably located in Elkhart, Ind., will work to strengthen area conference relationships by attending conference meetings and planning consultations and other contacts. Heavy travel and weekend work required.

  Applicants for both positions should be able to make quick transitions, be well acquainted with the church and be eager to be part of transformation of new Mennonite Church USA. Send resumes and inquiries to George Stoltzfus, general secretary, Mennonite Church USA, 421 S. 2nd St. Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; 219-294-7131; geobs@juno.com. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.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Lessons in humility

by Brian D. Stucky

Lessons of St. Louis 99 will stay with me forever. I knew there needed to be a level of humility in order for unity to happen—I just didn't know it would happen to me the way it did.

As delegates from Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan., we arrived in St. Louis unsatisfied with the guidelines for membership in the delegate workbook. We felt from a General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) viewpoint that it was too top-down, too heavy-handed, that we were in danger of having suit-and-tie executives in an office somewhere order our congregation to do something we didn't want to do. That was only natural, from our heritage as independent people of Kansas farm backgrounds who disliked having the government tell us what to do. Only two days before leaving home, we decided to draft an amendment.

My first lesson in unity was the worship on July 23. As an artist, I enjoy authentic symbolism but am repelled by corny or contrived symbolism. I was not expecting the part of worship in which participants brought vessels of water from rivers across the world. There was our associate pastor, Mark Wiens, offering water from the confluence of the Big and Little Arkansas rivers. The Little Ark was my river; I grew up along it, played in it, fished in it, have been flooded by it. The symbolism of unity as the waters were poured together moved me.

The second lesson came the next day as I walked through the large room where adult worship was held. A huge banner with the river logo stood between a river of prayers, cloths from hundreds of churches with prayers written on them.

Previously I had thought, What a corny, conference-y thing to do. Silly, unnecessary symbolism. I paused, then wrote, "Veni Sancte Spiritus" (come Holy Spirit) and "E Pluribus Unum" (from many, one) because, after all, I did want the Holy Spirit to come and unify us.

As I read the prayers written on the cloths—fervent, passionate prayers for unity—something happened. Hundreds of cloths with thousands of prayers pleading for unity moved me to tears. I collapsed to my knees to pray. I realized what this conference was about. Unity was being explored by humans, but in God's eyes, it is inevitable, and the only barriers are human barriers.

The third lesson came on July 25, the hot Sunday afternoon I walked down to the Gateway Arch. The heat and humidity were intense. As I dipped my hands in the Mississippi River, a cool breeze came over the water. I prayed and realized that spiritual gifts can only work when there is humility. As congregational chair, I may be skilled in guiding meetings, but my personal interests or agenda have no importance; only the will of God and the church matter. We have begun to understand that church business meetings are really worship experiences.

At our hotel, I changed our congregation's amendment into a question of clarification on the definitions of "conference" and "expectations." At the business session I asked for clarity in definitions to help us understand so we could support the guidelines. I hoped to calm the uneasiness of other GCs and have Mennonite Church (MC) members hear my concerns. I hope this contributed to a spirit of unity.

I collapsed to my knees to pray. I realized what this conference was about. Unity was being explored by humans, but in God's eyes, it is inevitable, and the only barriers are human barriers.

At the business sessions many talked about the tension of unity vs. diversity. Both are goals in the membership guidelines, along with covenant and accountability. One of the best quotes I heard was, "There is no diversity if everyone believes the same thing. There is no unity if we allow diversity to divide us." There can be neither without humility.

Brian D. Stucky lives in Goessel, Kan.

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Rich Preheim

Out of focus: the spirit of St. Louis

As the fur flies and the dust settles following our little gathering beside the river, it can be safely said that the U.S. delegates at St. Louis 99 vehemently disagreed on …

Uh, well, you know, *that* issue, you know, uh, the one we disagree on, um, of course it's that thing that has bedeviled integration, the question about, uh, um, you know …

No, we don't know.

And for that reason it shouldn't be surprising that integration—or transformation, as it is now being called—lurched mightily in St. Louis amid yet another polarizing episode.

It all comes down to what to do with those congregations that accept noncelibate homosexuals. We're all talking about it, but we're talking right past each other. Some folks argue that it is an issue of sin and biblical understandings, that homosexual sexual activity cannot be tolerated within the body of Christ. To do so could prompt congregations and maybe even entire area conferences to withdraw from Mennonite Church USA.

But other folks argue just as vociferously that the issue is one of polity and authority, of who decides who can and cannot be in the new church, regardless of the belief in question. That would help explain the 53 percent of General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) delegates at St. Louis who voted for their tradition of inclusion and congregational autonomy and against a resolution reaffirming church statements on sexual relations, even though presumably many of those delegates would agree that homosexual sexual activity is a sin. (In their 1989 study, *The Mennonite Mosaic,* J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger found that 90 percent of GC and 90 percent of Mennonite Church (MC) respondents said homosexual acts were "always wrong.")

Despite their common flash point in the current context, sin and polity are two vastly different issues. Discernment is hardly ever easy, but it is infinitely more complicated when we don't know what we are discerning. As a result, we have been at loggerheads for years.

Focusing our discernment efforts now needs to be priority. At St. Louis, the U.S. delegates received the proposed denominational guidelines—which take the polity approach to the matter—for two years of study. The guidelines and their homosexuality-related issues will probably be addressed, at least initially, by the Constituency Leaders Council. The CLC, a convocation of about 70 leaders from various groups, such as area conferences and racial/ethnic organizations, will first meet in October.

The CLC needs to help move the church toward an earnest, honest and concentrated examination of either homosexuality or membership. To continue struggling with both as integration/transformation issues can only continue the status quo. And we must not continue the status quo, with its infighting, divisiveness and prospects of splintering.

But responsibility doesn't rest exclusively with church leadership. Anyone with a vested interest in Mennonite Church USA—all current church members—needs to take great care to practice grace and humility toward all people who call themselves members as we try to discern how to relate to people we disagree with.

If there was a bright spot to this dark drama, it was that it shattered the myth that the membership/homosexuality issue is divided along GC-MC lines. Contrary to stereotypes, some GC delegates lamented any accommodation of sin, underscoring the possibility of members leaving the denomination. Some MC delegates, meanwhile, argued the polity position, urging the adoption of the membership guidelines so that a diverse church can move ahead together in its mission to the world.

Perhaps the saddest aspect of what unfolded at St. Louis was that all this wasn't supposed to happen. Back in March, the much-ballyhooed Kansas City consultation on membership and homosexuality produced virtually no progress on the membership question. But the gathering was praised for bringing together people to share and hear diverse perspectives. Participants said foundations were laid for understanding and discernment. There was hope.

Alas, there was little evidence of any of that at St. Louis. That hope has dissipated, that foundation eroded. While the necessary actions were taken by the delegates to continue the transformation process, more urgent steps are needed. And the first needs to be finding our focus.—*rp*

To continue struggling with both membership and homosexuality can only continue the status quo. And we must not continue the status quo.

the Mennonite

September 14, 1999

nonviolent evangelism

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Of resolutions and no resolution

Steve Estes has an almost poetic way of making a simple point (Readers Say, Aug. 24), namely that at St. Louis 99, we General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) delegates "really did place our own agenda before" (1) the Word of God, (2) the church's unity in Christ, (3) the truth, (4) our essential beliefs and (5) the future of the church, all because we failed to approve Harold Miller's resolution to reaffirm existing denominational statements on homosexuality.

Exactly what Miller's resolution had to do with these five subjects eludes me. Many of us who voted against the motion saw it as reinforcing stereotypes and therefore divisive rather than unifying. We were concerned about the kind of stereotypes that the late Marlin Miller, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, described in an issue of *AMBS Bulletin*:

"Some of the traditional [Mennonite Church] images of GC Mennonites collect around the notion that 'they' are not 'faithful in all things.' 'They' have been more liberal in their theology, more lax in their discipline and more lenient in their practice of nonresistance and nonconformity."

Estes' point was that Harold Miller's resolution was our opportunity to disprove allegations like this and we blew it. To me and others, the resolution implied that before some MC members can give integration their wholehearted endorsement, they must test our seriousness about biblical faith. And what better, more timely issue at hand to test our faith than homosexuality. It's not enough that we said at Saskatoon (with only a 19 percent dissenting vote) that sexual relations are reserved for a man and a woman in marriage and that we reaffirmed this in Article 19 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective; we must reaffirm this again at St. Louis so we can really prove our worthiness to belong to the same denomination.

We voted against the resolution precisely because of the need for truth telling about the hidden agenda it concealed.—*Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

There have been a number of interpretations offered about the debacle with the vote on the membership guidelines at St. Louis 99. On a call to reaffirm previous statements on sexuality, 72 percent of Mennonite Church delegates voted for it and only 47 percent of GC delegates. Why the wide disparity? What can we learn?

When we resort to power politics to force the issues, no matter how orthodox or correct the cause, we may expect negative results. I have great respect for the delegate who called for an end to an exceedingly polarizing debate. Unfortunately his motion failed, and we are wearing the egg on our faces. The message for me is apparent. Delegates representing minority positions will not allow themselves to be jerked around by a powerful majority. When we attempt to do this, we will all lose.

Perhaps we will need a few hard lessons like this in order to learn how to live and work together effectively. Let's back up and try again, letting humility and deference prevail. —*Bob Hartzler, Freeman, S.D.*

Native American waters

Thank you for the good report on the happenings at St. Louis 99 (Aug. 10). *The Mennonite* did a good job of covering most aspects of the convention. It was a bit disappointing, however, to note that in the article "Worship Draws From the River of Symbols," the representatives bringing water from the Choctaws of Mississippi and the Creeks of Alabama were not included in the listing of places from which water came.—*Ray E. Horst, executive secretary, United Native Ministries, Elkhart, Ind.*

Formula for good health

I am writing to respond to Susan Horein's Aug. 17 letter regarding infant formula and weaning cereals sometimes made available to Iraqi mothers as part of the food basket each Iraqi receives every month. Mennonite Central Committee is not directly involved in the contents or distribution of the food packages. In the center and south of Iraq, the food packages are distributed each month by the government of Iraq, and the contents are made available through funds raised under the United Nations food-for-oil resolution. MCC has been involved with sending food to Iraq and with other small-scale relief and rehabilitation projects.

As I live here and learn more about the impact of the sanctions and the nutritional situation in Iraq, I have also wondered about the impact of including milk powder and weaning cereals in the food packages. People I have spoken with at UNICEF and the United Nations Office of Humanitarian Coordination in Iraq explain that the need for such products stems from the poor nutritional status of mothers, which has a negative impact on their ability to breast-feed. Certainly as the sanctions drag on, the situation will become more serious as girls

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readers say

chronically malnourished from a young age mature, marry and begin bearing children.

Although MCC is not directly involved in the contents of the food packages, I am interested in following up on this issue with UNICEF staff and others who may be better able to respond to our concerns. I am also aware that UNICEF and the Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent support programs which promote breast-feeding.—*Carmen Pauls, MCC project coordinator, Baghdad, Iraq*

I agree wholeheartedly with Susan Horein's letter. Unless families have clean water, it is a mistake to provide powdered milk to mothers in lieu of breast-feeding. I had occasion to attend the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, a number of years ago when more than 100 countries voted against providing such formula to Third World countries. Sad to say, the United States did not vote for the resolution.—*J.J. Fransen, St. Catharines, Ont.*

Bottom up

There seems to be a lot of push to get on with integration at this time, and if my perception is correct, it seems to be coming from the top down. If this is so, it seems that a better way would be to proceed from the bottom up. There are already a number of churches that have dual affiliation and that should be encouraged. Mennonite Central Committee is an excellent example of Mennonite bodies of all persuasions working together for a common goal, and a stronger Mennonite Church ought to result when church bodies voluntarily join together. Of course, some will likely never join, but a coerced union will certainly bring about both apathy and disunity at least to some degree. So let's work for more dual affiliation and in that way grow into integration from the bottom up. —*James Faul, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

My alertness to God can carry over into my evangelism.
—*Marian Wiens*

Julie Gochenour

Students learn to overcome bad memories of evangelism and their own fears to see God's presence in others.

Nonviolent evangelism

By Julie Gochenour

For years Marian Wiens, a Mennonite who is a counselor and pastor's wife from Windsor, Ont., suspected she didn't have the right attitude about evangelism. Just the thought of it made her uncomfortable—uncomfortable enough to avoid it.

When Marian finally looked at her feelings, she found they were all tied up with childhood memories of camp meetings and traveling evangelists—memories seasoned with a hefty dose of black and white, right and wrong, fear and guilt.

Maggie Wynne, now a member of a Mennonite church in Raleigh, N.C., had a different set of problems with the heavy-handed approach often associated with evangelism.

"I have so much baggage around evangelism that it's hurtful to me and those I love," Maggie says. "I'm a recovering evangelical, … but I don't think evangelism was ever intended to be a four-letter word."

She goes on: "So many people are beat over the head with an evangelism stick [that has] no respect for the dignity or wonder of that person or permission to come into their lives with something so holy or precious. I know I would never have come to the Lord if I had been hit over the head with the gospel message."

Lawrence Yoder has a problem with both these types of evangelism. As professor of missiology at Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS), Harrisonburg, Va., he is convinced that evangelism is one of the fundamental responsibilities of Christians.

He's also convinced there are better ways to approach it—ways that work with God rather than against God. The first step is realizing that God is in charge of the process and already at work in the life of each person whether they recognize it or not.

So many people are beat over the head with an evangelism stick with no respect for the dignity or wonder of that person or permission to come into their lives with something so holy or precious.—*Maggie Wynne*

A junior partner: Lawrence Yoder in his garage-shop

"We can't make anything work out here by ourselves. We need some help," Lawrence says. "One of the things I've been trying to practice is expecting, looking for and trying to clue into and follow the indications of God's presence in a person's life."

Safe for others: Lawrence teaches what's been called "disciple-shaping evangelism," and Maggie and Marian took his class, Evangelism as Initial Spiritual Guidance, at EMS's Spiritual Formation Institute this summer. Instead of trying to sell salvation, both women learned how to make it safe for others to tell their stories. Their job as evangelists, then, is to listen to these stories and identify and call attention to God's presence in the person's life.

Maggie sees this as a nonviolent form of evangelism, which appeals to her. For Marian, the hard but exciting part is learning to see how God meets her in her own life, so she in turn can recognize how God is meeting others in their lives.

"Then whatever experience we're in, the Spirit can help us discern what facet of our story we can draw upon" to help relate to the other person, says Marian. "My alertness to God can carry over into my evangelism."

Lawrence's approach is to silently ask God to reveal what God is already doing in the person's life. Then Lawrence simply does a little detective work during the course of the conversation to identify where God is present in the person's story. Finally he risks telling a

Evangelism as spiritual guidance

Evangelism means different things to different people. We want to think of evangelism as making new disciples of people who haven't been disciples by applying the model of spiritual guidance or spiritual direction.

The basic assumption of spiritual direction is that God is already at work in the life of the believer. In this type of evangelism, we assume that God is present and active in the lives of all people, even though they may not have much awareness of it or clarity about who God is and how God would like to relate to them.

The goal of the evangelist functioning as initial spiritual guide is to learn to take the initiative in making contact with people, providing an opening for them to share what kind of awareness they have of God's activity in their lives and what level of clarity and understanding they have about it.

The further goal is to help them gain greater clarity of what God is like as we know God in Jesus Christ and of how humans can get on board with God's action and purpose in our lives, becoming full disciples and workers together with God in the world.

To do so, we must

- learn to value and appreciate all kinds of people and to discern and expect to discover signs of God's presence and action in their lives;
- learn to grasp more of the range of ways God engages people in their unique circumstances and restores them to wholeness;
- share and learn from our own experience of becoming a disciple by learning to speak clearly and simply of "the gospel according to me."—*Lawrence Yoder*

similar aspect of his own story—creating a safe space for the person to tell theirs.

It's an effective form of evangelism, but that's not Lawrence's first concern.

"The core merit here is recognizing that God is at work in the life of each person. It emphasizes collaboration with God, and that's what makes it effective," Lawrence says, adding that while he doesn't have to control the process or outcome, he must take initiative.

"I don't have to make it happen. I am a junior partner in this business, but there are certain things that will not happen unless I do them. God has decided he will get things done when he has responsive people to work through. Which means that we play a crucial, essential role."

Join God's effort: An unusual aspect of this evangelism is that Lawrence says he doesn't feel the need to close a deal, a traditional evangelistic practice. Instead, he believes God will make good use of the person's new awareness while working in their life. Lawrence's role is simply to join God's effort to gather all of God's children back into God's family.

Both Maggie and Marian agree that thinking of evangelism as gathering people into God's family helped transform their notion of evangelism from a negative to a positive experience—and Marian is no longer looking for reasons to avoid evangelism.

"In my head I knew evangelism was broader than what I'd thought, and I had heard of 'friendship evangelism,' but now my definition has broadened even further until it includes having conversations with neighbors," Marian says.

"This has changed my image of evangelism and been a powerful insight into seeing God's kingdom at work in everyone. It's made me more alert and open to how I respond to people around me."

Lawrence is convinced that's as it should be. "Yes, I have to learn to walk into situations and relinquish control because God is God. My worst downfall is when I presume to be God," he says. "But the second worst downfall is when I do not recognize and receive [God's] invitation for me to participate with him in his work."

Julie Gochenour lives in Harrisonburg, Va.

The lost purse

I felt sick when I realized I'd left my purse downtown. All my documents were in it. We had spent years and lots of money to finally obtain these permanent documents, and now they were gone. House keys along with our address were also in it. What would I do? I was about to go to the police to report the loss when the phone rang. A woman had taken it home. But the most interesting part was yet to come.

At her house I discovered that another woman had handed her my purse and asked her to watch it for a couple of minutes. But the mystery woman never returned. Searching the purse for a phone number, she found my business card identifying me as a Christian and involved with mission. We exchanged phone numbers, and she and her husband expressed interest in finding a church.

During the next month we spoke a couple of times on the phone. One day she called to say she had been diagnosed with uterine cancer. Their search for God intensified. One Thursday they came to church with us and made a commitment to the Lord. On Sunday night they were there again. They have expressed eagerness to learn about God's Word. We will meet with them to begin a time of discipleship.

I have chuckled over my good fortune of losing my purse. I see the hand of God working in this situation. Indeed, "all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). I take responsibility for losing my purse, but God had a redeeming purpose for my irresponsibility.

Janet Plenert works in Ceilandia, Brazil, for the Commission on Overseas Mission.

2.

Why integration?

A sociolog

by Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp

Those who exchange presents with one another remain friends the longest.—from an ancient Scandinavian poem

Human relationships depend on the ritual of giving and receiving. As we contemplate the long interaction of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC), we believe it is in the spirit of giving and receiving gifts that we can best understand and celebrate this unfolding pilgrimage together.

Our two groups within the Mennonite heritage have been exchanging gifts for hundreds of years. Dutch congregations helped Swiss and South Germans move to North America nearly 300 years ago. As recently as 50 years ago MC congregations helped Russian and Prussian Mennonites move to Canada and Paraguay. Large gifts accompanied many smaller gifts. The GCs taught the MCs "Grosser Gott, Wir Loben Dich" ("Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"), and the MCs helped all Mennonites remember "Praise God From Whom" (#606 in *The Mennonite Hymnal*). Many of us have received from across conference lines the gifts of spouses, sons- and daughters-in-law, parents and pastors. We have been invigorated by new spiritual insight and energy from preachers, teachers and writers who have enlarged our appreciation for the rich diversity of the Mennonite tradition. Many Mennonites, whether MC or GC, have become dear friends by exchanging gifts.

The giving and receiving of gifts provides bonding in kingdom relationships. John, the Gospel writer, records the words of Jesus: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. … I do not call you servants any longer … but I have called you friends" (John 15:12,15). Hospitality and friendship, the giving and receiving of gifts, flow through the Scriptures as a divinely blessed theme, as Abraham once received into his tent three angels, served them and thus was blessed. Giving, receiving, thanksgiving—these are essential elements in a life undergirded with worship.

The primary gift each group brings to the other is friendship and relationship. The presence of both in our work and worship enriches our knowledge, broadens our vision and deepens our faith understandings. We receive new friends as conversation partners, new models for working together, new attitudes to challenge our complacency, new stories of God's work to share. Integration is rich in promise as we receive these gifts with gratitude, as we anticipate with expectancy becoming a new people with God's blessing.

The gifts we have received from each other have blessed us in ways beyond count: pastoral training in Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, *The Mennonite*, a wealth of shared Christian education resources, Mennonite Women, *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, coordinated pastoral placement, an integrated voluntary service program and—with other Mennonite groups—Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Mennonite Disaster Service. Gifts already received give us confidence that new structures offer new openings for the ministries of the Spirit and the regularizing of gifts now present. New gifts supplement and complement our respective styles and experience. We live in anticipation of more gifts to come.

The Mennonite Church

1. The MC will receive the gift of a greater concern for the unity of the church. The GC has long identified with the classic Christian motto "Unity in essentials, liberty in nonessentials and love in all things." The MC in its striving to be faithful has often felt the need to "maintain the right fellowship." We can learn the art of collaboration and the discipline of unity in essentials.

2. The MC will receive the gift of spirited debate and acceptance of diversity. The GC has dealt with competing insights within congregation, committee and conference in a spirit of charity and mutual respect. The MC has been more apprehensive regarding confrontational discussion. We can learn that there can be "liberty in nonessentials and love in all things."

3. The MC will receive the gift of a larger vision for "seeking the welfare of the city." The GC has been freer to give witness to the social and political issues of the local and national community. Many within the MC continue a traditional attitude of being "the quiet in the land." Together we can learn new ways of being salt and light in North American public life.

4. The MC will receive the gift of an enlarged understanding of the Mennonite experience. The GC carries within itself the creative and tragic stories of Mennonites journeying from Holland eastward into Northern Germany and Russia. The MC is more identified with the Swiss, French, South German stream and nearly 300

This is the second of four articles exploring reasons for integrating the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. In this issue, Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp look at sociological reasons. In the next two issues, Ruth Suter will look at organizational reasons, and Ervin Stutzman will look at spiritual and biblical reasons for integrating.
—the editors

cal perspective

The giving and receiving of gifts between two Mennonite groups

years in the United States. Both traditions are essential for the Mennonite testimony in the 21st century to Christ's gospel of love and reconciliation.

5. The MC will receive the gift of people who remember recent suffering. The GC includes thousands who survived totalitarian tyranny and who were refugees in the epoch since World War II. Many have lost relatives in the struggle to be faithful to Christ in the despotism of the Soviet Union. This may help us empathize with peoples decimated in the killing fields of the late 20th century: Cambodia, Sudan, Rwanda, Kosovo. The MC memory of suffering is largely recorded in the 17th-century *Martyrs Mirror*. We can learn anew the meaning of a costly faith.

The General Conference Mennonite Church

1. The GC will receive a strong sense of relatedness of the congregation to the assembly of congregations (conference). To supplement the historic cultural diversity of the GC (South Germans, Swiss, Volhynian Swiss, West Prussians, Galicians, Hutterians, Low Germans from Poland and Russia, Central Conference Amish), we will receive a people more culturally cohesive, a people who have been in North America for almost three centuries.

2. The GC will receive the gift of a strong sense of continuity of faith through the generations from New World beginnings in colonial America. From the MC come concerns for passing on our Anabaptist faith and savoring it as a resource for Christian formation. For a GC of more recent immigration, the MC brings a 19th-century experience of drawing from, testing and mediating American evangelical spirituality.

3. The GC will receive a series of experiences in local planting of small, mission or satellite congregations, some in urban areas. This has brought into the MC many congregations of color—black and Hispanic—numbers approaching 10 percent and growing. Here are varied models to reach into communities undergoing rapid population growth. The MC also brings a tradition of replenishment from those of Amish background.

4. The GC will receive a history of explicit teaching of peace, simplicity and separation from the compromising and conformist claims of conventional society. The more consistent commitment of MC youth to the conscientious objector position in World Wars I and II may have aided the GC in the postwar resurgence of its peace witness. The MC has demonstrated cohesion during the last several decades of cataclysmic societal change—not without angst. Given the challenges of rapid change in a wealthy and seductive culture, both have gifts of simplicity, peace-mindedness and faithfulness to share. We need each other's strength in a time of anxiety.

5. The GC will receive large numbers of people long established in areas of population density: the Eastern Seaboard, the Southeast and the Great Lakes states—this to balance the GC membership base in the more rural Great Plains. With membership rooted in areas of urban growth and energy, the MC brings more experience in the use of corporate models in church programming as we cope with a bewilderingly complex, changing society.

Conclusions

We could speak of many more shared gifts—not the least of which are our respective sister congregations overseas, which enhance our awareness of a global church.

This is our invitation to our fellow members in each group to join us in giving thanks for the gifts we have received from our sisters and brothers of the other group and to envision with anticipation the gifts yet to come.

To be open to receiving gifts is not easy. To receive gifts sometimes injures our sense of pride, our sense of self-sufficiency. If we wish to give, we must learn to receive. Giving and receiving are reciprocal blessings: generous in sharing, grateful in receiving. Integration will grow and mature if we come together sharing gifts, grateful and rejoicing in God's Spirit.

We are not always happy with the words, caricatures and euphemisms we use. Perhaps cooperation becomes easier if we see our groups as building blocks of the body of Christ rather than as the body of Christ. Integration will be less daunting if we see the emerging Mennonite Church as a new entity becoming, rather than definitively being, "the church."

Both of us long for the day when all Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups become a uniting Mennonite Church. Until that event of grace occurs, the word "conference" may be more inviting for others than the word "church." Then the widening circle of gift giving and receiving will be more abundant in blessings.

As we exchange gifts we honor each other. If our two conferences give and receive gifts freely, a new glow of the Spirit of God may radiate among us, a radiance that attracts the attention of the world.

Giving and receiving are reciprocal blessings: generous in sharing, grateful in receiving. Integration will grow and mature if we come together sharing gifts, grateful and rejoicing in God's Spirit.

Robert S. Kreider lives in North Newton, Kan. John A. Lapp lives in Akron, Pa.

Congregational study important for all levels of church, say participants and organizers

From First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va., to First Mennonite Church of San Francisco; from Germantown Mennonite Church of Philadelphia, Pa., to Pearl River Mennonite Church of Philadelphia, Miss.; from Deer Creek (Okla.) Mennonite Church to Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church, congregations are starting a study process to help guide the formation of the new Mennonite Church.

But the effect it will have on the integrated denomination is not why Ron Guengerich likes the study, called "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church."

"It could also be called 'Envisioning a New Mennonite Congregation,' " says Guengerich, pastor of Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio. "There are good questions for every church to be asking, not just about the denomination, but questions everyone needs to ask of themselves," he says.

Sunday school classes, Wednesday night groups and other gatherings in an estimated 500 congregations across the United States and Canada will spend September and October with "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church." One purpose of the study is to solicit feedback to help develop ministries and structures for Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

But study participants and organizers also emphasize the study's applications at the local level. "If the study can't help congregations look at their own mission in their own communities, it would not be helpful long term [to the denomination]," says Ron Byler, associate general secretary of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board and a member of the congregational study committee.

The study, written by Commission on Home Ministries executive secretary Lois Barrett, is divided into six sessions. Topics include congregational and denominational contexts, images of the church, the reign of God and the church, mission, community, and vision and identity. Participating groups are then asked to return a response form.

Frank Woelk, pastor of Spring Valley Mennonite Church in Newport, Wash., says the study of those topics can help foster identity in his diverse congregation. "I want to draw [Spring Valley] together more as a community of Mennonites rather than a collection of individuals," he says.

Most congregations, such as Spring Valley, are studying "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" in adult Sunday school classes. But Debbie Schmidt, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Hutchinson, Kan., is encouraging her youth group to also spend time with the study.

"Last spring, we had long discussions about violence, and that has spawned a whole new interest in being a peace church," she says. "And I think they are very interested in having input in the shape of the church."

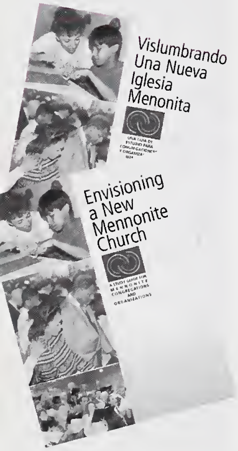
Guengerich, who ordered one copy of the 32-page study for each of the 180 households in his congregation, is preaching a series of sermons based on the study and its use of 1 Peter's theme of resident aliens. "This is a good way to do theology," he says.

In Illinois Conference, conference officials tried to contact every congregation regarding use of the study. Conference secretary Susan Sommer says they were propelled in part by their current regional efforts with Central District, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences. "So we're very interested in getting the feedback," she says.

Participants are asked to respond to the study by early November so results can be compiled by January 2000. The Transformation Team, responsible for directing the formation of Mennonite Church USA, will examine the results in mid-January. The findings will then be shared and discussed at a Jan. 28-29 consultation of area conference, denominational and agency leaders.

The results are crucial to helping shape mission efforts in the new church, says Commission on Overseas Mission executive secretary Ron Flaming, who is project leader for transforming the current mission agencies. He says he hopes the study shows "where our congregations are in ministry and … what help do they need in doing missions."

About 12,500 copies of the study in English were printed. They were available at St. Louis 99, and three copies were also sent to each congregation in the United States and Canada. Less than 1,000 copies remain warehoused. The study was also printed in Spanish, and 10 copies were sent to each Spanish-language congregation. Photocopying of the study is encouraged.—*Rich Preheim*



There are good questions … everyone needs to ask of themselves.

—Ron Guengerich

Life in Macau's missionary graveyard

Multinational Mennonite team finds joys amid struggles

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill.—No one ever promised that mission work would be easy. But the tiny, densely populated East Asian island of Macau seems to be particularly stubborn ground.

With its high turnover of mission workers, Macau has even been described as a missionary graveyard, says George Veith. "If you come to Macau with any kind of [emotional or spiritual baggage], you will either be crushed or healed," says George, who serves with his wife, Tobia, with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) in Macau.

Gambling and prostitution are available 24 hours a day on Macau, a Portuguese colony soon to revert to Chinese control. On an island of 500,000 people, only about 20,000 are Christian, mostly Catholic. There are some 3,000 members in 60 Protestant churches.

"It's been difficult, but there's a deep joy in knowing you're where God is calling you to be," Tobia says.

Before moving to Macau in 1996, the Veiths had spent four years in Hong Kong with COM. The work in Macau sprang from several Mennonite churches in Asia. The team consists of the Veiths, Shirley Liem from Indonesia, and Bill Tse, a Chinese pastor from Hong Kong. Liem is affiliated with COM and partially supported by her congregation. Tse is supported by COM.

A Macau advisory team,with representatives from Mennonite groups in Hong Kong, Indonesia and Taiwan, plus staff from COM and Eastern Mennonite Missions, meets annually to help direct the work in Macau.

"The three Mennonite churches in Hong Kong take turns sending someone every month to worship with us as a way of offering support," George says.

A lot of time has gone into developing relationships, both on the team and with the small group of local people that is beginning to gather around them, the Veiths say.

Currently, the small Mennonite group—an average of six people including the team—meets in an apartment next door to the one in which the Veiths live with their three children. An upcoming matter for prayer and discernment is whether to move the meeting location to a storefront, to make it more visible.

"Things are moving slowly if you look at it in terms of conversions," George says. "But we're getting to know more and more people. It's encouraging how more of the pastors [of the other churches in Macau] are getting together and praying together. There's a sense that Macau is getting ready for a spiritual revival, and it's exciting to think that the Mennonite church will be part of it."

They have seen other bright spots, too. Tobia points to a group of Christian women who have begun meeting together in the past year for worship and intercessory prayer for Macau. Some women have also started prayer-walking: walking through an area and praying for what they see as they pass through.

"It's uplifting to see any kind of focus on the worship of Jesus in a city where there is worship of so much else," Tobia says.

Tobia also sees growth in their little Mennonite group, which is built on a cell church model. Last fall, she made an unexpected trip to Canada for the funeral of her brother, who was killed in a bicycle accident. While she was gone, the family had to move into a new apartment.

"Not long after I got back, there was a housewarming," Tobia recalls. "There was something about the way people visited with each other and shared blessings for our new home and the way the children played that just seemed like Jesus was there, like a foretaste of what the church could be. It was the kind of encouragement we needed right then."

Encouragement also comes from elsewhere. "When we pray, we ask God, 'Lord, what do you want this church to look like?' " George says. "We know it's to be a place where people can find healing and wholeness. We look at the vision in Isaiah 61 of preaching good news to the poor and setting the captives free."
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

> It's been difficult, but there's a deep joy in knowing you're where God is calling you to be.
> *—Tobia Veith*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Under pressure

Janelle Zook of Grantham, Pa. (right), takes the blood pressure of Manuela Joscano Gonzalez at a clinic in Roca Blanca, Mexico. Zook, a nursing student at Messiah College in Grantham, co-led a monthlong, five-member Summer Training Action Team to Mexico. STAT is a youth program of Eastern Mennonite Missions. The clinic in Roca Blanca is free and open two days a week for area villagers.

He who has ears, let him expand his work

Tanzanian learns of MEDA from restaurant customers

Caribbean leaders back in school

The third term of a fledgling Mennonite seminary started this month in Hatillo, Puerto Rico, training Caribbean pastors and lay leaders.

Seminario Anabautista del Caribe (SAC), started in January, is a joint project of the Mennonite churches of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic plus Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa., and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

SAC's offerings include evening and weekend classes, retreats and summer programs in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Teaching staff is local, and congregations provide classroom space.

In addition to Hatillo, where 27 students completed their second term in May, 23 students have studied at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and 13 at Cayey, Puerto Rico.—*EMM News Service*

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania—It pays to listen to customers, says Tanzanian restaurateur Mselem Ally. After all, that is how he learned about Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA).

Ally routinely listens to his customers in order to serve the items they want in his Dar es Salaam restaurant. One day some customers who were chowing down a lunch of fish and "ugali" (a thick corn porridge) happened to be clients of MEDA's microenterprise program. They explained how they had been able to borrow money at affordable rates to expand their own small businesses.

Ally took note and decided to contact MEDA himself. Before long he qualified for a loan of $900 (U.S.) and was able to utilize the loan to boost income from his 9-year-old business.

MEDA's loan enabled Ally to enjoy the benefits of wholesale purchasing. He now is able to buy flour, rice and soda in large enough amounts to qualify for bulk discounts. Small quantities of dried fish, much used in Tanzanian cooking, cost about $4 per kilogram, twice the wholesale price. Ally can also afford to build a store room to hold the additional supplies.

Ally says that before he received the loan, he earned about $30 a day. Now thanks to the expansion, he has increased his profit by 50 percent—something that would not have been possible without the MEDA loan. "It's not easy to get credit elsewhere," he says.

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Mselem Ally displays a menu of selections from his restaurant in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. He was able to improve his business with a loan from Mennonite Economic Development Associates.

MEDA

Ally and his wife and six children, along with six employees, serve 100 customers a day. Their bustling restaurant is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. For breakfast they serve tea, a hearty "morning soup" and beans. Ally explains that many of his customers at that time of day are construction workers, and "people who work in construction like to eat beans in the morning for strength." Later in the day, the menu broadens to include Indian food, rice, fish and meat, and of course the popular ugali.

After he has paid off this loan, Ally hopes to qualify for a larger loan that will enable him to open a second restaurant in another area where he can be open longer. "A bigger loan would allow me to buy everything wholesale," he says.

Ally's long-term dream is to build a thriving family business that he will be able to turn over to his children.—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

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European Mennonites gather in England for 1999 colloquium

BRADWELL-ON-SEA, England—Fifty adults and two dozen children and teenagers met July 26-Aug. 1 for the biennial European Mennonite colloquium.

Started 25 years ago as a retreat for Mennonite Board of Missions workers in Europe, the event has now expanded to include the congregations planted by MBM workers and other European Mennonites engaged in mission work.

During the gathering, participants helped celebrate the 89th birthday of Eileen Coffman, who was present at the colloquium. She and her late husband, John, served with MBM in England from 1954 to 1967. She now lives in London.—*MBM News Service*

Manitoba school wins discrimination suit

STEINBACH, Man.—Eight years after the case was launched, the Manitoba Human Rights Commission has ruled that Mennonite-affiliated Steinbach Bible College was within its rights to fire an accounting clerk because of her membership in the Mormon church.

Esther Schroen, a former Mennonite, was dismissed in 1991, and she had been fighting it since then on grounds of religious discrimination. But the commission's ruling said religious affiliation is a bona fide criterion for employment at the school.

Schroen had been hired without any discussion of her religious affiliation. School officials assumed she was Mennonite because Schroen's name on the application included her maiden name, Enns, a common ethnic Mennonite name. In her application, Schroen noted her participation in Mennonite programs, including serving as a tour guide at Steinbach's Mennonite Heritage Museum.—*ChristianWeek*

New relief sale to be held in Maryland

McHENRY, Md.—Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in western Pennsylvania and Maryland on Sept. 18 will host the newest relief sale to benefit Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The sale will be held at the Garrett County Fairgrounds in McHenry, starting with breakfast at 6:30 a.m. and an auction at 9 a.m.

The sale is one of 38 to be held this year across the United States and Canada. It is also the second sale to debut this year. MCC constituents in Versailles, Mo., held their first sale in May.

MMA plans emphasize stewardship, technology

CHICAGO—Mennonite Mutual Aid is going into the new millennium with plans for new initiatives on stewardship and technology. The efforts, part of MMA's 2005 Plan, were reviewed by the MMA board in meetings last month in Chicago.

One initiative is a stewardship university, to be led by Mark Vincent, who joined MMA on Aug. 1. He will continue his current leadership of the Giving Project but also create a new stewardship education program with MMA.

MMA has also established an internal E-Commerce Council to help direct the organization's Internet strategy and web site development. Plans are in the works to give members online access to their MMA financial accounts.

Also part of 2005 Plan is offering trust services. MMA earlier this year applied for a federal charter to offer trust services, and federal regulators are expected to act on the application within 12 months.—*MMA News Service*

by the way ...

Since first published in 1972, 845,000 copies of John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus* have been sold.

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Events

"Vision and History: Telling Our Story" conference, Sept. 17-18, Mennonite Information Center, Berlin, Ohio. Speakers: Susan Biesecker-Mast, Tim Lichti, John L. Ruth, Jeff Wright. Sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church. Contact: John E. Sharp, 219-535-7477 or johnes@goshen.edu.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region I annual meeting, Oct. 2, Fayette, N.Y.

Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church 40th anniversary celebration, Oct. 2-3. Contact: 717-859-1488.

Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church 40th anniversary celebration, Oct. 3. Contact: Carol R. Schrock, 330-683-8921 or CRSchrock@aol.com.

Workers

Bjork, Marie-Rose, Washington, is beginning a three-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Congo as a job-creation networker.

Brubaker, Alice and Dennis, Harrisonburg, Va., are beginning one-year assignments with MCC in Honduras as disaster response workers.

Driedger, June Mears, on Aug. 31 concluded a pastorate at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Frey, Elaine and Sid, Mount Joy, Pa., are beginning one-year assignments with MCC in Honduras in response to Hurricane Mitch.

Goertzen, Donald, Shafter, Calif., is beginning a four-year assignment with MCC in the Philippines as a teacher.

Kaufman, Robert, on Sept. 1 started a pastorate at Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City, Kan.

Lehman, Jill, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in China as a teacher.

Stafford, Rod, on Sept. 1 started a pastorate at Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Births

Brubaker, Grant Logan, July 30, to Dale and Sharon (Weaver) Brubaker, Myerstown, Pa.

Cameron, Audrey Miriam K., July 26, to Margie and Scott Cameron, Los Angeles.

Geissinger, Joseph Ray, Aug. 22 to Kevin and Tara Geissinger, Pennsburg, Pa.

Gerber, Brooke Nicole, Aug. 24, to Brenda (Miller) and Jeremy Gerber, Wooster, Ohio.

Hostetler, Ailey Rinn, Aug. 1, to Chad and Minnette Burkholder Hostetler, Philippi, W.V.

Kratz, Austin Martin, Aug. 20, to Carissa (Martin) and Rodney Kratz, Telford, Pa.

Leis, Seth Christian, July 23, to Marvin and Susan (Stewart) Leis, Tavistock, Ont.

Manickam, Faith Gabriela, Aug. 15, to Joe and Wanda Manickam, Pasadena, Calif.

Mark, Jacob Paul, Aug. 20, to Kim (MacDonald) and Paul Mark, Granger, Ind.

Nafziger, Elias Henry, Aug. 9, to Jeremy and Michael Ann (Courtney) Nafziger, Fairfax, Va.

Smith, Blaine Thomas and Sharolyn Faith (twins), July 15, to Kristin (Krabill) and Tom Smith, Albany, Ore.

Swartzendruber, Jacob Jon, Aug. 18, to Jon and Linda (Galter) Swartzendruber, Shickley, Neb.

Weaver, Katlyn Marie, Aug. 12, to Jeremy and Joan (Steiner) Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Yutzy, Abigail Ann, Aug. 20, to Eric and Kim Yutzy, Hutchinson, Kan.

Marriages

Amstutz/Stuckey: Rachel Amstutz, Goshen, Ind., and Aaron Stuckey, Mishawaka, Ind., Aug. 7 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Ayars/Hunsberger: Jonathan Ayars, Schwenksville, Pa., and Tonya Hunsberger, Souderton, Pa., Aug. 14 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Bachman/Reichenbach: Heather Bachman, Goshen, Ind., and Brian Reichenbach, Freeport, Mich., July 10 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Bell/Miller: Gayla Bell, Hutchinson, Kan., and Darrell Miller, Hutchinson, Aug. 21 at First Church of the Nazarene, Hutchinson.

Blew/Willems: Alice Blew, Hutchinson, Kan., and Arnold Willems, Inman, Kan., Aug. 21.

Bragdon/Miller: Richard Bragdon, Somersworth, N.H., and Linda Miller, Somersworth, July 17 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Charles/Kline: William Charles, Landisville, Pa., and Melinda Kline, Lancaster, Pa., Aug. 21 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Erb/Weidman: Angela Erb, Elizabethtown, Pa., and Adam Weidman, Quarryville, Pa., Aug. 14 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Goans/Ortiz: Tonie Goans, Millersburg, Ind., and Joe Ortiz, Goshen, Ind., Aug. 14 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hochstetler/Kramer: Hope Hochstetler, Hutchinson, Kan., and Richard Kramer, Hutchinson, Aug. 14 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Hoover/Siegrist: Lester Hoover, Lititz, Pa., and Anna Siegrist, Aug. 21.

Kauffman/Short: Chad Ryan Kauffman, West Liberty, Ohio, and Kristi Jo Short, Archbold, Ohio, July 24 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Konkel/White: Susan Marie Konkel, Littleton, Colo., and Mark Juan White, Alabama, Aug. 29 at Riverside, Calif.

Krabill/Ylen: Andrea Krabill, Albany, Ore., and Mark Ylen, Albany, Aug. 21 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Nofziger/Stuckey: Jon Curtis Nofziger, Archbold, Ohio, and Rebecca Ann Stuckey, West Unity, Ohio, Aug. 21 at Stryker, Ohio.

Nofziger/Tinnes: Keith Nofziger, Littleton, Colo., and Angela Tinnes, Littleton, Aug. 7 at Washington, Iowa.

Stamm/Zuver: Duane Stamm, Archbold, Ohio, and Betty Zuver, West Unity, Ohio, July 31 at Harrison Lake State Park, Fayette, Ohio.

Deaths

Hedgepeth, Alice Yates, 85, Newport News, Va., died Aug. 18. Spouse: Clifford Hedgepeth (deceased). Parents: William and Ethel Harrell Yates (deceased). Survivors: children Alice, Clifford Jr.; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Mutchler, Glenn Jr., 67, Dalton, Ohio, died Aug. 7 of complications from surgery. Spouse: Betty Snyder Mutchler. Parents: Glenn and Oda Senger Mutchler (deceased). Other survivors: children Susan Boltz, Robert, Jane Smucker, Hope Siegenthaler; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 11 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, Ohio.

Nofziger, Lloyd, 88, Wauseon, Ohio, died Aug. 10. Spouse: Ilva Beck Nofziger. Parents: Jacob and Caroline Burkholder Nofziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Merrill, Ronald, Dorwin, Jerry, Cheryl Karagiorge; 18 grandchildren; 4 stepgrandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; 18 stepgreat-grandchildren; seven stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 14 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Schrag, Gordon, 93, Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Laura Sherk Schrag. Parents: Christian and Mary Gingerich Schrag (deceased). Other survivors: children Keith, Mary Kauffman, James, Mark; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Schroeder, Leander, 75, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 6. Spouse: Bernice Detwiler Schroeder. Parents: Peter and Susie Becker Schroeder (deceased). Other survivors: children Susan Rhoades, Richard, Dan, Jeffrey; 11 grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 11 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Showalter, Sara Ann Hess, 60, Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 23 of cancer. Spouse: Millard Showalter. Other survivors: children Brent, Mark. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Thieszen, Helen Epp, 87, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 14. Spouse: Aaron Thieszen (deceased). Parents: Heinrich and Katharina Buller Epp (deceased). Survivors: children Nina Smith, Marcella Martens, Lelan, Dean, Lela Regier, Erland, James, Glenden; 20 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 17 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Tinsler, Carl, 88, Marshallville, Ohio, died Aug. 7. Spouse: Erma Shoup Tinsler (deceased). Parents: Albert and Elizabeth Tinsler (deceased). Survivors: children Marie Brenneman, Velma Brotherton, Mary Giffin, Irene Griffith, Anna Terry, Gladys, Paul; 17 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Voth, Ella Rempel, 93, Chouteau, Okla., died Aug. 5. Spouse: John Voth (deceased). Parents: Peter and Helena Schmidt Rempel (deceased). Survivors: children John, Melvin, Donald, Esther Brenneman; 16 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Wiens, Menno, Inman, Kan., died July 29. Spouse: Mary Wiens. Other survivors: children Dennis, Sheryl Palmer, Darrell, Fred, Mark; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Whitehead, Archie, 74, Minier, Ill., died July 25 of a heart attack. Spouse: Glenndora Hall Whitehead. Parents: Ralph and Margaret Ellen Wilcox Whitehead (deceased). Other survivors: children Stephen, Jeffery; six grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at Boynton Mennonite Church, Hopedale, Ill.

Yoder, Suzanne Troyer, 96, Goshen, Ind., died July 28. Spouse: Wilbur Yoder (deceased). Parents: Levi and Savilla Miller Troyer (deceased). Survivors: children Floyd, Barbara Vitou, Forrest; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

classifieds

- **Powhatan Mennonite Church,** a growing congregation in central Virginia with evangelical and conservative convictions, seeks a ***pastor*** with some training and experience. 804-222-4345 or hlburk@aol.com

- **Akron Mennonite Church,** a multistaffed congregation, seeks ***senior pastor*** with strong biblical, theological and human relations training from an Anabaptist perspective. M.Div. degree preferred. Send resume to Jerry Shank, 531 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522; email jeshank@redrose.net

- **Groffdale Mennonite Church,** Leola, Pa., seeks ***interim pastor.*** Preferred candidate will possess experience in biblical, theological and administrative leadership from an Anabaptist perspective for a multistaffed 250-member congregation. M.Div. preferred. Send resume to John Frey, 168 N. Groffdale Rd., Leola, PA 17540; 717-397-1523.

- **Jubilee Association,** a Mennonite-affiliated organization that serves adults with developmental disabilities in metropolitan Washington D.C., is seeking a ***director of program services.*** Responsibilities include supervising 6 program managers and overseeing all program-related services in the residential setting. Bachelor's degree and 5 years supervisory experience required. Contact Paula Snyder, 301-949-8674.

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has opportunities for ***youth to retirees*** to serve overseas for a year or more in one of the following: leadership development among the Maasai in Kenya; conflict resolution, peace and justice training in Djibouti; church planting/community development in Cambodia; finance directors for Lithuania and Mongolia; church planting in Albania; and agricultural development in Mongolia. To find out more about these, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president of clinical services,*** a new position providing administrative supervision and guidance to various departments including health services. Qualifications include a college degree in health administration or related management field. Supervisory experience in long-term care preferred. Nursing Home Administrator license helpful. Submit resume to Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; or call 717-581-3936.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***director of development.*** Responsibilities include planning and implementing fundraising activities, including annual appeals, planned giving, capital campaigns and special events. Prefer candidate with at least 2 years experience in fund raising, a bachelor's degree, effective communication skills, and an understanding of and appreciation for the Mennonite faith. Apply with Human Resources, Landis Homes Retirement Community, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Enjoy living and serving in Oregon!** The Mennonite Home of Albany seeks applications for the position of ***executive director*** for this 500-resident accredited retirement community. The person selected will be in harmony with the Mennonite faith and life. He or she will have had successful experience in management in a retirement community and possess strong communication and human relations skills. A master's degree in health care or business administration or equivalent education will be helpful. Send resume or inquiry to Gene Kanagy, chair, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-924-9722 or 541-928-5541 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community,** a respected, progressive continuing-care retirement community, has an exciting opportunity for a ***director of business management*** in our business office. This individual will organize, direct and supervise all business office functions. Will also supervise office staff, compile statistical reports, oversee IT function, coordinate compliance with local/state/fed regs. Three-plus years experience, CPA required; MBS a plus. Rockhill Mennonite Community offers competitive salary, benefits and opportunity for professional growth. Please send resume to Carol Summers, Rockhill Mennonite Community, 3250 State Road, Sellersville, PA 18960, or fax 215-257-7390. EOE

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time. To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237, email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **Mennonite Board of Missions** seeks candidates for ***executive director of the Great Lakes Discipleship Center*** in Fort Wayne, Ind. In partnership with MBM and the GLDC board, this person will lead vision-casting and strategic planning for the center and the Reaching and Discipling (RAD) program. This effective leader must have vision, passion for mission, be a positive model of Christian discipleship, be committed to Anabaptist theology and have knowledge of Anabaptist-Mennonite constituency. Committed to the Discipleship Training School model, the person must have excellent skills in communicating with participants, GLDC board and the wider church. Also important are cross-cultural experience, an understanding of North American youth and young adult culture, experience in supervision and team leadership, and a bachelor's degree with relevant major or at least five years experience. If interested, please contact Rachel L. Stoltzfus, Mennonite Board of Missions, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515; 219-294-7523; email Rachells@MBM.org

- **Western Mennonite School** has the following openings for fall 1999:

  Assistant boys' resident director (youth ministry position): Duties include mentoring, leading Bible studies, coordinating youth activities, discipling and supervising dorm students. This is an excellent opportunity for someone trained or interested in youth ministries. Full-time voluntary service; housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin immediately.

  Maintenance assistant (full-time voluntary service position): Carry out duties as assigned by head of maintenance to include maintenance and repair of buildings and grounds; vehicular maintenance skills preferred. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin Nov. 1.

  Contact Darrel White, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Mennonite Church USA** seeks the following people:

  1. Energetic person well-versed in ***finances and development activities*** needed to serve newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This full-time executive position, to be located in Elkhart, Ind., will give oversight to former MC finances, relate to the former GC development office and begin development work on behalf of the new Executive Board. Related committee work will also be assigned.

  2. Full- or part-time two-year executive position for person in love with the church. Primary responsibility will be to tend to ***area conference relationships*** with newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This position, preferably located in Elkhart, Ind., will work to strengthen area conference relationships by attending conference meetings and planning consultations and other contacts. Heavy travel and weekend work required.

  Applicants for both positions should be able to make quick transitions, be well acquainted with the church and be eager to be part of transformation of new Mennonite Church USA.

  Send resumes and inquiries to George Stoltzfus, general secretary, Mennonite Church USA, 421 S. 2nd St. Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; 219-294-7131; geobs@juno.com. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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by Gordon Houser

As the heat of summer changes to the cooler air of autumn, my favorite season, I think of a welcome weapon in our battle against the pressures of the ubiquitous media in our fast-paced culture: walking.

If you explore various spiritual traditions, you'll find mention of this activity occurring often in connection with prayer. Of course, much of the world also depends on this means for getting from one place to another, and in our automobile-obsessed nation, perhaps walking is one of the more radical, revolutionary acts one can perform.

In the fall issue of *Spirituality & Health* ($18 per year, write 74 Trinity Place, New York, NY 10006), Stephen Kiesling reports on the research of psychologist Robert E. Thayer, who has documented "maybe one of the most significant observations in the history of the world," writes Kiesling, "... a clue leading directly to the core of human happiness."

What could this be? "The best and most reliable way to improve your mood is to take a brisk, 10-minute walk," writes Kiesling. Thayer has tracked how powerfully our moods motivate us. He also points out that humans are about the world's most energy-efficient land travelers. Kiesling writes, "Walking is what human bodies are best designed to do."

Without the research to back it up, Christians have known this for centuries. Pilgrimage is a long tradition among believers. When you read the Psalms you can't help but notice that many of them are designed to be sung by pilgrims on their way (most often) to Jerusalem to worship God.

Two recent books explore Christian pilgrimage: *The Way of the Lord* by Tom Wright (Eerdmans, 1999, $10) and *On the Pilgrims' Way* by J. Nelson Kraybill (Herald Press, 1999, $15.99).

Wright, a New Testament scholar from England, focuses on pilgrimages to the Holy Land. He writes that pilgrimage to holy places "has a valuable role within the church's teaching ministry, ... is a stimulus and an invitation to prayer ... [and] can be for many a time of real growth and depth in discipleship."

In successive chapters he reflects on various places in the Holy Land, their significance in the biblical story and what Christians can learn from visiting them. He ably combines biblical study with popular writing and makes challenging comments. For example, he writes: "The church has not found it easy to stay in Gethsemane with Jesus, perhaps because it has regularly preferred one of the other options: either to get on with the business of establishing a worldly kingdom of God, or to retreat, to withdraw, into the cultivation of a private piety and a quietest hope."

Wright includes an epilogue on the Holy Land today and fairly describes the injustices experienced by Palestinians.

Having been to the Holy Land, I resonated with much of the author's reflection, which also made me long to walk there again.

Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., makes me also want to walk along the 140-mile Pilgrims' Way in England. His book is a series of "conversations on Christian discipleship" during his 12-day walk on this ancient trackway, the setting for Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

Kraybill recounts conversations with other pilgrims on topics of Christian discipleship from the Gospel of Luke: conversion, prayer, celebration, community, money, doubt, risk-taking and peacemaking. His fellow pilgrims include Mennonites, Baptists, Anglicans, Catholics and others. The book also provides a map of the Pilgrims' Way and photos taken by the author.

Also a New Testament scholar, Kraybill writes in a popular style, mixing description of his travels and conversations with helpful insights from Scripture. For example, he writes: "In the Gospels, disciples of Jesus were people either already vulnerable or willing to become so."

As I walk to work each day, I'm thankful for this pilgrimage tradition, for health, for the chance to reflect and pray. Walk on.

TV

This month "Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly," hosted by Bob Abernethy, returns for a third season on PBS. The program features in-depth coverage of religion, spirituality and ethics from all over the United States and the world. This season's shows will include stories on presidential candidates, biomedical research and the expected visit of Pope John Paul II to the Holy Land. Also on many PBS stations this month are a number of programs dealing with race, cultural diversity and the American identity. Among these are "American Playhouse: An American Love Story," "Paul Robeson: Here I Stand," "The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers Struggle," "Seeking Solutions ('Gangs')," "Not in Our Town II: Citizens Respond to Hate," "Fooling With Words With Bill Moyers" and "Kennedy Center Presents: The Americanos Concert." Check local listings for times.

art

Matt Busby (left), a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker and artist-in-residence at Patchwork Central, a ministry in inner-city Evansville, Ind., and Laura Weaver (right), retired English professor at the University of Evansville, exhibited "Divided Together: Written and Visual Explorations of the Self" in August at Patchwork Central. The exhibit featured text by Weaver and blind-contour drawings by Busby. Both bodies of work are made up of self-portraits that reflect on human experiences of the self being both one and many. Each artist is a Mennonite, but their experiences of the Mennonite church have been different.

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Marla J. Cole

The truth is out there

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.—Isaiah 40:28a

Five months ago my husband's company transferred us to Roswell, N.M. The name Roswell may conjure up thoughts of UFOs and TV's *The X-Files*, which says, "The truth is out there." But for us, Roswell is a fairly normal town of 49,000 people. It also has 67 churches, but not one of them is Mennonite.

I've lived in many parts of the United States and have always had reasonable access to a Mennonite church. But if you look in an atlas, you'll see that Roswell is pretty isolated; the closest Mennonite congregation is in Carlsbad, 75 miles away.

Living in such an isolated place forced me to realize that even in remote locations the Creator of the ends of the earth is present. Although I knew this deep down, I was still full of questions those first few months.

How were we going to make friends? How would we find a church that fit our beliefs? And how would we ever alleviate the feeling of isolation? After a couple months I reread a devotional in the *Women's Devotional Bible* that was paired with the verse above. I realized we had a unique opportunity to not only familiarize people with the Mennonite faith but also strengthen our own.

Even though I'm not surrounded by people with a similar heritage and denomination, I am surrounded by the greater Christian family. No matter where our home is, God is there with us.

There are so many different religions and beliefs out there that we rarely give much thought to how many people are unfamiliar with or have misconceptions about the Mennonite faith. Everywhere I've lived, two responses have always come up when I tell people we are Mennonite. The first is, "You don't look Mennonite." Translation: You don't look Amish. The second is, "Is that like Mormon?" Translation: They both start with the letter M. There was even a Baptist woman who asked me about the Mennonite religion. She had never heard of it. When I told her we were Anabaptists, she looked concerned and said, "Did you say you're anti-Baptist?"

In a Mennocentric environment it was easy to get caught up in being Mennonite. It was easy to live it socially but ignore it spiritually. Thinking of myself as Mennonite seemed to exempt me from thinking about being Christian. Now, living away from those with a similar heritage, I have been forced to face my faith and examine my spirituality through the only measure that counts—studying the Word of God. Not being surrounded by people of like mind forces me to focus on being Christian, which is what being Mennonite is basically about. I learned to focus first on what being a Christian means and then look at how Mennonite beliefs fit what the Bible says.

Living away from Mennonite communities and churches has awakened my Christian spirit. It has also made me realize and appreciate that even though I'm not surrounded by people with a similar heritage and denomination, I am surrounded by the greater Christian family. No matter where our home is, God is there with us. That is the truth that is out there.

It is comforting to have
God,
Who is as much at home
on one end of the earth as the other.
Where is the end of the earth?
To me, it may be in China or Africa;
To a Chinese or African, it may be New York.
Physically, the world has no end.
But …
When I come to the end of myself,
wherever I am in the world,
God is there.
And from that seeming dead end
He can create new life,
and give new strength.
I never need fear that I have not
taken him along.

(From *A Blade of Grass*, Zondervan, 1967, by Gladis and Gordon Depree, in *Women's Devotional Bible*, Zondervan, 1990)—*mjc*

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one soul's journey

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Necessary atonement

Re "The Theology of Christ in the Margins" (Aug. 31): First, J. Denny Weaver treats the theology of satisfaction atonement as if it is simply a position created to solve the problems caused by embracing the state church and the sword. I disagree quite strongly. The question we all should ask is, "Is satisfaction atonement present in the Bible?" Clearly it is. If one doubts this, he or she should read the New Testament again.

Second, certainly there is a cosmic battle going on between good and evil. We need to understand Jesus' role in this cosmic battle. At the same time, salvation is an individual experience, and at the center is an issue of dealing with the sin that separates God and individuals. Jesus did more than just win a cosmic battle against evil; he died to cover my sin to make a relationship with God possible. He atoned for, or covered, my sin to satisfy the demands of a perfectly righteous and just God.

Third, before embracing the Christus Victor idea exclusively, we would do well to dive further into the ultimate end of Weaver's theology, which is universalism. From the article, he said, "Through Christ the Victor, humanity is freed to celebrate salvation in the reign of God." My first question, of course, is "Freed from what?" The answer to that question takes us back to the need for satisfaction atonement. My second question is as simple: "Is all humanity freed because Jesus died on the cross and rose again?" If they are, then all people, regardless of whether or not they accept the work of God personally, have been freed. Therefore, all people are going to live eternally with God. Is this really what the Bible teaches? The victory of Christ over evil makes it possible for all humanity to have relationship with God, but it does not make it certain for each individual.—*Michael Danner, Roanoke, Ill.*

Choosing God's control

Parts of the Aug. 17 editorial ("What Must it Feel Like to Be God?") left me with an uneasy feeling and a need to respond. I realize that God has given us free will and choices, but I disagree with any statement that implies God "wonders"or "agonizes"about our decisions and outcomes. I believe that there are no surprises for God, that he always knows what the outcome will be before we do.

For me, one of the greatest mysteries is where our free will ends and God's control begins, or vice versa. I heard somewhere that our freedom of choice is a like a bunch of little circles spinning within the larger, all-encompassing circle of God's will. I do know from Scripture that God definitely has control and exercises it over our attitudes and decisions according to his will. I've also been taught that until the Holy Spirit gives us understanding, the Bible's words can have little meaning to us.

I don't understand why sometimes God works to close minds and other times opens them, but God does have the power to do either, and in the light of his perfect wisdom, we only need to trust and surrender our thought processes to him. Maybe that's one of the only important decisions we do have control over. I agree that our daily decisions do matter to God, but in the big picture, over the course of my lifetime, God knows my salvation and final destiny have been placed in his hands.—*Beth Johnson, Souderton, Pa.*

Celtic appreciation

Thanks for mentioning Celtic Christianity in the Aug. 17 Mediaculture. I have been researching this kind of material for nearly 20 years (even longer experientially since my mother's family is from Scotland and retained some of that "native" spirituality). My wife and I in the past have used *Celtic Daily Prayer* from the Northumbria Community of northeast England and are currently using Philip Newell's *Celtic Prayers from Iona* (I am an associate member of the Iona Community of Scotland) as a part of our daily prayer discipline. We together read Esther de Waal's book earlier this year. Good stuff!

Thanks for mentioning this tradition, which has some elements that resonate with Anabaptist types, but Mennonites could certainly learn a lot from what is to me a more holistic perspective.—*Gary Olsen-Hasek, Portland, Ore.*

The example of grace

My husband and I became members of Manhattan (Kan.) Mennonite Church last Sunday. I have been following and discussing in small groups the issues of integration, and I can't keep from wondering where God's grace comes into the picture. I began attending MMC a year ago. The congregation welcomed me with open arms, even though I was leading a life that the Bible clearly states as sinful. In that year I have noticed myself trying to follow Christ's teachings more closely. I would not be a part of this group if I had been rejected for my transgressions. I would be sitting home on

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y readers say

Sunday mornings resenting them and God. Their acceptance has brought me closer to God, and isn't that what the church is all about? We all come forward with our sins, and we are saved by God's grace. Shouldn't we follow that example when we work in our own congregations?—*Rhonna Hargett, Manhattan, Kan.*

The rate of progress

In the Aug. 24 Readers Say, Henry Gerbrandt draws attention to one topic that after integration is a mystery to me: How are Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA to conduct international mission work? I worked with Henry in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada some years ago, when our decision was to go forward with Aussiedler work in Germany, as a number of our Canadian workers were able to deal with the German language. That made sense. For two mission enterprises to go forward, one on each side of the 49th parallel, is a sign of dubious stewardship. There are many aspects of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions that could be adapted. But going national in our work is not progress. —*Lorne Buhr, Edmonton*

Healing and hope for the grieving?

My brother today is attending the funeral of someone he dearly loves who was killed in a tragic accident. Yet he grieves privately and isolated from the local Mennonite community because the person he loved was also a man. My brother cannot grieve publicly because he risks condemnation, judgment and further isolation rather than the comfort, support and sympathy any of us needs during times of intense grief. Where is the church offering healing and hope to my grieving brother? I grieve for us all.—*Name withheld by request*

Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt

A woman's testimony
on the day
of her baptism

One soul's journey

by Peggy Yorke

As a small child I would slip into the orchard and hide in a tree, lost in my own small world. There I escaped the bickering, the shouting, my father's drunkenness. His belt could not find me there.

When I was old enough to attend school, I enjoyed the time I escaped the hostile environment of my home. But I was a thin, ugly child who soon learned how cruel other children could be. We were taught about God, sin and the devil. It terrified me. I was so afraid I would end up in hell.

At home my hiding place became a tunnel I had made from the discarded wooden coffin crates I found behind the casket factory. Often I crawled into my tunnel to escape the sounds of my mother and brother's beatings, my father's drunken, abusive rages, and eventually my mother's indifference and abandonment.

One day my father was off somewhere on a drunk and my mother had not been home for days. My older brother and I joined ranks to take care of our baby brother. We told lie after lie at school to hide the fact that we were all alone. We took turns going to school.

> **Often I crawled into my tunnel to escape the sounds of my mother and brother's beatings, my father's drunken, abusive rages, and eventually my mother's indifference and abandonment.**

What little family life I had was torn away at age 8. The next few years I moved from one foster home to another. In my last foster home, the father did not like me at all. I was leery of him, and in desperation I threw a dozen eggs and a quart of milk at him to stop his advance. Even though I thought he'd kill me, I enjoyed the sight of the milk and eggs running down his face. The next day, when I came home from school, my bags were packed, sitting on the front steps, along with my social worker.

I was put in a convent. The first few years were hard. I was again abused, only in a new and terrifying manner. Due to my disobedience, the sisters locked me in a four-foot-by-eight-foot cell on a diet of bread and water. The chapel bell was right outside the cell. The tolling of the bell echoed off the cell walls so loudly my ears hurt. It tolled six times a day.

The bed was a thin mattress on a cement slab. The blanket was too thin to keep me warm at night, and there was no light in the cell, only a one-foot-square window up by the ceiling. My toilet was an open pail in the corner. I had no control over my life, but it remained my decision when and where I would go to the bathroom. By the fourth day my body screamed in agony from the need to eliminate my body's waste. But not on my life would I use that pail.

I visited this tiny cell many times. Upon relating my experiences to my social worker, I was rewarded with her disbelief and a ruler painfully rapping my knuckles in punishment for lying.

Music lessons: After a couple of years in this sterile environment, I turned to Jesus. I was still searching for the love I desperately craved. I knew of Jesus but did not know him. However, I found some peace and thanked the Lord for my many blessings. My bodily comforts were taken care of—three meals a day; decent, warm, clean clothing; a safe bed at night. For the first time I got a taste of the good things life can offer: music lessons and theory, ballet, gymnastics, fencing, Girl Guides, swimming, camping, arts, crafts, sewing, needlework and cooking lessons.

However, I still longed for the warmth of a hug, the joy of feeling wanted, nourishment for my starving emotions, to know that I was worthy of life, to fill my empty heart and soul. I went to chapel often and knew the proper Latin responses to Mass. I knew my prayers and recited them often. God, sin and the devil no longer terrified me, but the love of Jesus escaped me. I was still afraid of going to hell.

At age 18 I married to give my illegitimate daughter a name. The promise of love died quickly. My husband stood over my 4-year-old and me, holding a rifle to our heads. He started to play with the shell by putting it in and taking it out, then pulling the trigger. I silently beseeched the Lord for our safety, never knowing whether the shell was in the chamber or not. The police finally came after hours of my

Marilyn Nolt, for illustration only

screaming for help. At the time I did not realize it, but Jesus was there holding my hand and watching over us.

Still searching for love, I left my husband and entered into a common-law relationship. I had jumped from the frying pan into the fire. For a couple of years I foolishly took the mental, emotional and physical abuse. After all, my mother didn't love me. Who could? I was living in sin and thought that God could not love me. I was sure I'd go to hell.

Even though I didn't admit it, deep in my heart I knew Jesus loved me. He would not abandon my three innocent children. Using my loneliness to hide in, I survived. When my partner started to abuse the children, I found the courage and strength to leave and seek a better path. At the time I didn't realize it, but God was with me and gave me a helping hand. God was my hope.

For the few years as sole provider for my children, I became lost in hopelessness. My drinking and promiscuous lifestyle were surely paving the road to hell. Even though I had lost my hope, Jesus was still with me. He sent me a wonderful man. Ray's love helped heal the raw wounds of my emotions, and at last my heart received the love it had been searching for all my life. At long last I realized I am a good person, worthy of love. My hope was answered.

We were married by a minister, since we both wanted our union to be blessed by God. The Lord blessed us with a son. We worked hand-in-hand to raise our family. As the years went by we survived the bumps and potholes—our daughter's open-heart surgery, one son's dance with suicide, another son's severe dyslexia and the death of our oldest daughter. We leaned on each other and survived.

Blooms of joy: Our children are now in relationships of their own. We are blessed with 10 beautiful grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Life was good, but something was still missing. My soul felt empty. With the help of my new friends I found the love of Jesus that always seemed to be eluding me, and I was born again. My soul is now a flourishing garden full of the wondrous blooms of joy, comfort, peace, hope and love.

In Acts 2:38 Peter says that if we repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, we will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. I was baptized as a baby in the Catholic Church. I do not remember it, and as a baby I had no sin. I have lived a full life, part of it full of sin.

Today we remember the crucifixion of Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, he took our sin and shame. I belong there, not him. Before you all I confess my sins and ask the Lord's forgiveness through baptism.

I end my testimony with my prayer to God: Jesus, I give thanks for the strength you have given me to be able to forgive the people who have wronged me. Lord, I am thankful that you have always been there with me, for showing me how much my mother loved me, for Ray and our family. Lord, I thank you for answering my prayers and the joy I received when Ray told me he wanted to be baptized. I am especially thankful for your blessings, for being born again and for your forgiveness. I give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which I shall receive through baptism today. Lord, I pray you will keep holding my hand and that you will hold it tight so that I will not lose my way again. Jesus, I raise my arms in praise. You were and always will be my hope. Amen.

Peggy Yorke gave this testimony at her baptism at Manigotagan (Man.) Community Chapel, a Mennonite congregation. This article first appeared in Intotemak.

> Even though I didn't admit it, deep in my heart I knew Jesus loved me. He would not abandon my three innocent children.

Marilyn Nolt, for illustration only

3. Why integration?

An organizational

by Ruth Suter

From early in our separate histories, the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) have had the impulse to work together. Unsuccessful attempts at cooperative mission work in the late 19th century did not interfere with the formation of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) a generation later.

Since MCC formed, there have been many other joint or cooperative Mennonite ventures, including Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), Civilian Public Service (CPS), Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS), youth ministries, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), a common vision statement (Vision: Healing and Hope), a common confession of faith (Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective), at least two generations of Sunday school curricula (Foundation Series and Jubilee: God's Good News) and several cooperative hymnal projects (*Mennonite Hymnal*, *Hymnal Sampler*, *Hymnal: A Worship Book*). Over the last 20-odd years, several area conferences have explored and subsequently implemented integration efforts, resulting in integrated conferences in Canada (Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada) and in the United States (Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences).

The rationale one often hears for integration is a structural argument. It goes something like this:

- Unity of organizational structures leads to greater efficiencies and less redundancy.
- The burgeoning number of cooperative GC and MC ventures requires maintenance by multiple organizational structures in the United States and in Canada. With the adoption of the same vision statement and confession of faith, it makes less and less sense to retain these separate structures.
- Since MC and GC theologies seem to be converging, why not merge the organizational structures as well?

As a Mennonite who has spent some time thinking about church structures during the last decade, I am convinced that the reasons for integration have little to do with expediency of corporate structures.

This is the third of four articles exploring reasons for integrating the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. In this issue, Ruth Suter looks at organizational reasons. In the next issue, Ervin Stutzman will look at spiritual and biblical reasons for integrating. —*the editors*

Why integrate?

At Wichita 95, when the decision was made to integrate, the rationale was clear. At that assembly, the GC and MC denominations adopted a common confession of faith and a common vision statement. The sense was that agreement had been reached and integration had been achieved on the important issues (vision and theological purpose). What remained were the organizational details. At Orlando 97 and Winnipeg 97, delegates reaffirmed this sense of integration, again charging the General Boards to complete the structural work.

Since 1997, we have experienced how organizational details can touch the very core of what unifies and divides us. In the past two years we have focused on the divisive differences. What have been lost in the discussion are the fundamental reasons for integration, namely implementing our common vision and theological purpose.

Why is integration so difficult?

Integration of church structures has been difficult because the MC and GC denominations come from different organizational histories. The existing MC denominational structure is a relatively new construct, dating to the 1970s. Some of the area conferences that make up the MC have been in existence for a long time—predating the denomination by hundreds of years. The GC started out over 100 years ago as a denomination. Program areas, districts and other activities have arisen out of the pre-existing denominational structures.

MC and GC leaders think about fundamental organizational constructs like congregational and conference responsibility, accountability and representation in ways that rise out of their respective histories. This is why structural issues such as membership or conference vs. congregational representation at assemblies are so emotion-packed. The MC and GC denominations come at these fundamental organizational questions from different perspectives.

To oversimplify, MCs favor policy or vision formation and program implementation at the

perspective

Let structures evolve more organically through the leading of the Spirit.

area conference level (with program also occurring at the denominational level). GCs favor policy or vision formation at both the congregational and denominational levels. In the GC model, program occurs primarily at the denominational level—hence the historical opportunity for cooperation with the MC program entities.

While common program is a necessary outcome from integration, it is not sufficient justification for integration. Seeing beyond program activities and organizational structures that will be impacted by integration has sometimes been difficult for both denominations to do. The challenging part of integration is figuring out a way to create a new entity—different from and better than the two original denominations. The key for successful integration is unity for the purpose of focusing on greater mission, not unity for preserving traditional structures.

The key for successful integration is unity for the purpose of focusing on greater mission, not unity for preserving traditional structures.

What have we learned?

Integration can be a positive experience as it forces people to re-examine why they are members of the Mennonite church. It encourages new ways of communicating and relating. Integration changes some things—first and foremost, organizational structures at the denominational level. But the structures proposed in the new Mennonite Church denomination will not change the important personal and spiritual relationships between area conferences and congregations.

Integration can be energizing when people feel that making the change is the right thing to do and look forward to relating to each other and to God in new ways and in new settings. If we feel that God's presence is at the center of the change, the result is a new sense of energy and purpose.

On the U.S. West Coast, "greater unity for greater mission" was the rallying cry for integration in the early- and mid-1990s. The results have exceeded our wildest expectations. As an example, in Southern California, 11 churches have started since 1995, with more on the way. Organizational efficiencies have been a welcome by-product of integration. Without the confusion and miscommunication brought about by having to work as several conferences, we have streamlined the church planting and leadership formation process and created greater local awareness of one another and of God's presence in our midst.

The decision to form U.S. and Canadian church bodies has also brought a burst of energy in recent months in the initial formation of a U.S. church body and in the beginning stages of the transformation of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada into a new Canadian body. As the initial excitement of the decision fades, I hope that "greater unity for greater mission" will continue to be the focus for integration activities in the United States and Canada and will help identify new partnership opportunities between our two countries here in North America.

What does the future hold?

Integration is not a panacea. As we have learned since 1995, differences in organizational structures, polity, power and authority must be named, processed and resolved. The work is difficult—often the clashes in perspective come from deeply held values that are tough to articulate or talk about. Change is challenging. It disrupts the status quo and makes us vulnerable. Trust is tough to maintain throughout a process of active change with others who may not share identical values or communication styles.

But throughout the process it is important to keep our focus on the reasons for integration—namely, our common vision and theological purpose—and to allow the organizational structures to evolve more organically through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

My vision for the new Mennonite Church brings all people of Anabaptist faith together into a model of Christian unity. The new Mennonite Church will be heterogeneous, with representation from all ages, races, geographic locations and both genders proclaiming the good news to our postmodern society. I am excited and eager to be a part of this new church.

Ruth Suter lives and works in the San Francisco Bay area. She was a member of the Integration Committee, the U.S. Country Committee, and served as the Integration Committee liaison to the Integration Communications Task Force. She is a member of First Mennonite Church of San Francisco and is assistant moderator of Pacific Southwest Conference.

Century-old Bluffton College finds mission niche as Mennonite school with non-Mennonite students

It's not China or India or any of the other historic sites of Mennonite mission activity. But Perry Bush says Bluffton (Ohio) College could very well be added to the list.

Unlike its sister U.S. Mennonite colleges, Bluffton doesn't have a large local concentration of Mennonites to tap for students. Instead, the school has been proclaiming Anabaptist concepts of discipleship, peace and service to a campus community where only two of every 10 students are Mennonite.

"This is sort of a mission field," says Bush, professor of history at Bluffton. "We work with a non-Mennonite, nonethnic student body."

Bluffton, the second oldest of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges in the United States, is celebrating its centennial during the 1999-2000 academic year. Bush is the author of the school's centennial history book. Other commemorations include historical displays, a video and exhibits by alumni artists.

Events will start with a community picnic on Sept. 25 and conclude with the annual May Day festivities on May 6, 2000. Homecoming on Oct. 16 will feature a historical program. Composer and choral director Alice Parker has been commissioned to write a choral work for the centennial; it will be premiered at the winter choral concert on Feb. 27, 2000.

Bluffton was started in 1900 as Central Mennonite College. Despite its name, the school was more of an academy and junior college. The school in 1914 was refashioned into a four-year college and renamed Bluffton.

For the next decade or more, the school found itself caught in the fundamentalist-modernist firestorm raging in Mennonite circles. Historian C. Henry Smith and former president Noah Byers left conservative Goshen (Ind.) College for progressive Bluffton, which was developing a star faculty.

While the nasty theological debates of the times helped spur bad feelings between Bluffton and Goshen, located 150 miles apart, that wasn't all, according to Bush. "It's college rivalries," he says simply.

By the end of the 1920s, Bluffton had developed a vision for a "Harvard of the Mennonite world," Bush says, serving all Mennonites, including groups such as the Defenseless Mennonites (now Evangelical Mennonite Church), which had no college of its own. The school offered master's degrees and had given birth to a seminary.

Photo courtesy of Bluffton College

A large crowd turned out June 19, 1900, for the laying of the cornerstone for College Hall, the first building for Central Mennonite College in Bluffton, Ohio. The school, now named Bluffton College, is celebrating its centennial during the 1999-2000 school year.

But that vision evaporated in the Great Depression of the 1930s. By 1944, Bluffton had 77 students. Bush credits Lloyd Ramseyer, Bluffton president from 1938 to 1965, for setting a direction of education "based on Mennonite principles but not confined to Mennonites." Given the small number of constituents locally and in its supporting conferences, Central and Eastern districts, Bluffton started drawing more and more non-Mennonites. Enrollment rose to 800 during the 1960s. After dipping below 600 in the 1970s and '80s, Bluffton has seen its student numbers mushroom to more than 1,000 for each of the past five years. That growth has prompted a spate of construction projects on campus.

Despite the low percentage of Mennonite students, Bush says Bluffton is a Mennonite college. He cites the percentage of faculty who are Mennonite and the school's mission statement, which notes that Bluffton is "shaped by the historic peace church tradition."

"Bluffton remains an Anabaptist school," Bush says. "That's the marvelous thing about this place."—*Rich Preheim*

1899-1999
Bluffton College
A CENTURY OF EXCELLENCE EDUCATING FOR LIFE

Bluffton's centennial logo

School days

Founding dates of the current U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges:

- **Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.—1887**
- **Bluffton (Ohio) College—1900**
- **Goshen (Ind.) College—1903**
- **Hesston (Kan.) College—1909**
- **Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.—1917**

Indonesians search for peaceful solutions as unrest increases in East Timor, elsewhere

JAKARTA, Indonesia—When President Suharto stepped down from power in May 1998 amid Indonesia's political, military and social instability, the world applauded. But the country's reform process is far from over. While widespread killing, rioting and looting devastate East Timor, the unrest is not isolated to the embattled Indonesian province.

Mennonite Central Committee does not have volunteers or program in East Timor but does work in Irian Jaya, another eastern province where many people desire independence from Indonesia. Six Irianese, including a church leader with whom MCC relates, are restricted from leaving the country. They are accused of traveling abroad to seek support for an independent Irian Jaya.

Other locations on the 17,000-island chain are also experiencing violence and unrest: in Ambon, some 37,000 Muslims have fled their homes; in Aceh, there are now 145,000 refugees, with numbers changing daily. The causes are complex, but violence seems provoked by ethnic, religious and economic differences, which are exploited by politicians.

Grieved by such stories, students at Duta Wacana Christian University in Java have been gathering to discuss peaceful ways to resolve differences. The university has invited MCC to join the discussions, and MCC worker Duane Ruth-Heffelbower is preparing to begin a position at the school's peace center.

Henri Hamonangan of the Duta Wacana Christian University peace center has experience in resolving conflict. He has guided village leaders to work at conflict among themselves. In 1992, he worked to resolve conflict between university faculty and students. In 1995, he was a member of a mediation team formed to resolve conflicts between quarreling student groups. Last year, before Suharto's fall, Hamonangan helped successfully negotiate with military and police officers for permission for students to demonstrate at the parliament building.

Hamonangan said the violence stems from the differences between rich and poor. While tensions among ethnic and religious groups have always existed, it is only since last year when Indonesia's economy worsened that small incidents have led to violence.

Other Indonesians are also interested in peaceful solutions. Last year in Java when an ethnic Chinese Mennonite business family heard rumors that an anti-Chinese demonstration would take place in their town, the family prayed together. They decided not to try to protect their house and business but instead to invite demonstrators into their home, treating them as guests and talking to them about reasons for their anger. Meanwhile, the family's neighbors, also ethnic Chinese, stockpiled weapons. In the end the demonstration was averted.

MCC staff recently met with Thamrin Ely, a Muslim leader who serves on an interreligious committee in Ambon. He says that Christians and Muslims there have lived side by side for many years. Although tension existed, there was never the bloodshed that is taking place now. Ely is now in Jakarta, unable to return home to Ambon because of fighting there.
—Faye Brenneman, Philip Siegrist and Abang Rahino for MCC News Service

Militarism all wet, thanks to farmer

Its not exactly turning swords into plowshares, but it's close.

Hanley, Sask., farmer Henry Harder was needing water troughs for his cattle. But the 300-gallon ones he looked at were too expensive and not easily transportable.

Then Harder heard about some bomb containers for sale. The bombs inside had become obsolete and were destroyed. What was left were the exterior fiberglass casings. They are light, virtually indestructible—and the price was right.

With a few modifications, such as turning the containers upside down and cutting holes in them, Harder converted four casings into 250-gallon water troughs.
—Canadian Mennonite

Global diversity reflected in new book on Anabaptism

KITCHENER, Ont.—The international Mennonite church is becoming increasingly diverse. That's why a new study guide on Anabaptism will be available in five languages.

Mennonite World Conference commissioned Anabaptist historian C. Arnold Snyder to write *From Anabaptist Seed,* a study on the "historical core of Anabaptist-related identity." The 54-page booklet, to be published by Pandora Press of Kitchener, will be printed in English, Spanish, Indonesian, French and German. Other translations may also be forthcoming.

The booklet is intended to provide a historical point of reference for discussion and discernment about what it means to be Anabaptist in today's world.—*MWC News Service*

Mary E. Klassen

Eye to eye

Karmen Fehr, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., paints the eye on a bird that is part of a mural of the animals coming out of Noah's ark. The mural covers one wall of AMBS's childcare facility. The childcare program is a cooperative run by AMBS students for all seminary families with children ages 1 to 6. Nine children are involved with this year's program.

MEDA program not Santa in disguise

Hard line necessary to make loan venture work

MEDA

I gave them a deadline. I have to show that I'm not joking.

—Dionisio Matos

MAPUTO, Mozambique—Dionisio Matos doesn't look like a tough guy. He's amiable, warm, ready to smile. He seems like he'd make a good next-door neighbor.

But on this Monday morning, he is steeling himself to a hard edge. As credit manager in Mennonite Economic Development Associates' (MEDA) microenterprise program in Mozambique, he has a difficult day ahead. Clients have fallen behind in their loan payments. They had promised to pay last Friday. But some have reneged, and Matos is clearly troubled.

"Today we have to be tough," Matos says. "This is Operation Iron Fist."

Taking along padlocks to close the shops of delinquent clients, Matos heads to the Xikelene Market, a sea of shacks and shops on the northern outskirts of Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. The prospect fills him with dread. But he sees no alternative.

"I gave them a deadline," Matos says. "I have to show that I'm not joking."

At Xikelene, more than 4,000 vendors sell everything from produce to textiles to plastic pails. Many of the vendors live a hand-to-mouth existence. Revenue from sales must be reinvested to replenish inventory. With luck, there's enough profit to help pay family expenses. But it's not easy to set aside money to expand. A small loan helps them boost inventory and gain breathing space. These vendors, however, don't get the time of day from commercial lenders. The venders have little collateral or credit history, and the loans they need are too small to interest the banks.

MEDA's microenterprise program tries to combine compassion with business. It provides credit access for an ignored sector, but that doesn't mean it is Santa Claus in disguise. The goal is to provide business-oriented assistance, so economic sustainability is important.

The average loan to a client is $250, although some are as low as $90. Generally, loans are made to small groups of people who help keep each other accountable for repayment. A typical loan is for 16 weeks, with payments required weekly. Nearly two-thirds of the participants are women.

A group of 30 members of a fast-growing Pentecostal church in Maputo is among the program's most punctual clients. The pastor, Antonio Nhancule, approached MEDA with a request on behalf of his members who wanted to better themselves economically. Nhancule reports he has seen visible economic improvement among his members as a result of the program.

"They are better able to feed their children and send them to school," he says.

But Matos is worried that the program has rolled into a valley, with a number of client groups overdue in their payments, some more than 90 days. "When you get that far behind, it's hard for them to catch up," he says.

Matos is determined to improve the numbers. "We have to use our iron fist," he says.

Carlota Mucavel operates a cold storage business a few steps from MEDA's field office in the center of the Xikelene Market, storing fish for other market vendors. She is several payments behind and now faces the prospect of being locked out of her shop.

Mucavel's story is familiar. Like many vendors, her cash flow is tight. The slightest problem can turn into a crisis. Some weeks ago her husband got sick, and she used money set aside for her loan payment to cover his expenses.

When Matos learned of the problem he arranged a catch-up installment plan. He wanted a tangible expression of good faith. But last week Mucavel had been tardy again, and Matos was running out of patience. Her latest excuse? Friday had been a holiday, and the bank had closed early so she couldn't make her deposit.

Matos listens patiently. He tries to be understanding. Later he will check it out and find that it rings true. He decides to give Mucavel more time.

"We have to impress on clients that they are getting a loan, not a gift," says Sergio Chusane, one of two credit officers in MEDA's Maputo program. "If they don't pay it back, we can't lend it out to their neighbors."

Every week Chusane hears excuses. "There's always someone sick," he says. "This week it's the wife, next week it's their child, and the week after it's their uncle.

"I tell them, 'MEDA's money never dies, MEDA's money never gets sick, MEDA's money never gets late.' "

Matos returns to his downtown office after a long day of meeting with delinquent clients. His stock of padlocks remains intact; he hasn't had to use them.

"We didn't need the iron fist," he says, a broad grin sweeping across his face. "We used diplomacy."*—Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

Central District Conference's peace blitz leaves CHM scrambling to fill record order

NEWTON, Kan.—The peace business all of a sudden got good this summer for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

The Peace, Service and Justice Committee of Central District Conference was searching for a proactive step to encourage the peace witness among its constituents. So the committee chose to send "Decide for Peace" packets, available from CHM, to all the 17- and 18-year-olds in conference congregations, plus one packet to every congregation that had no young people in that age group.

The committee's order of 268 packets sent CHM scrambling. "[CHM] normally keeps only a few on hand because people only occasionally order them, which I think is sad," says committee member Mick Sommers.

CHM executive assistant Chris Graber says, "It was definitely the biggest [one-time] order for the packets we've ever had."

CHM had to quickly get more materials printed and gather workers to assemble the packets for the late July mailing.

The U.S. version of "Decide for Peace" (there is also a Canadian version) is a folder that contains literature from a number of peace and justice organizations, including National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, Christian Peacemaker Teams and Mennonite Voluntary Service; a sample copy of the Selective Service registration form for the draft; and material from Mennonite Central Committee about a "Christian Peacemaker Registration" as a way of preparing for registration as a conscientious objector. Also available is a guide for personal Bible study and reflection on conscientious objection.

Sommers says the committee discovered that "Decide for Peace" was "the best thing going" for youth peace education.

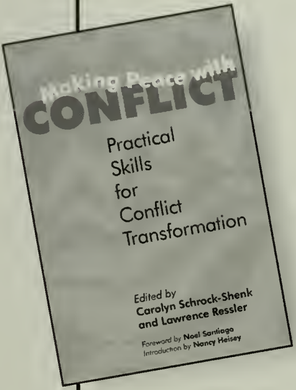
"Our [committee] has really struggled with figuring out what we can do, how to get a handle on what to do with churches," Sommers says. "We have been mostly a fund-granting organization. This is a way to be active.

"It's hard to keep young people focused on peace issues during peacetime. ... [The mailing] is an attempt to encourage young people, and some older ones, to rethink the whole peace process."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

We have been mostly a fund-granting organization. This is a way to be active.

—*Mick Sommers*

Does Conflict Surprise You?


Making Peace with
CONFLICT
Practical Skills for Conflict Transformation
Edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler
Foreword by Noel Santiago
Introduction by Nancy Heisey

Does conflict still surprise and often overwhelm you? Do you wish you had a better understanding of how to transform life's inevitable conflicts from problems to opportunities? Do you wonder what power has to do with conflict?

Here is a practical guide to understanding and transforming conflict based on biblical and Anabaptist principles. Over 20 noted authors shaped by many experiences and cultures tell of lessons taught by walking conflict's holy ground. Some insights will be familiar, some new—and some able to trigger new conflict!

Study questions continue the conversation begun in each of 17 chapters and will help highlight the common ground as well as differences readers may have with authors and each other.

Making Peace with Conflict, edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler, is a project of Mennonite Conciliation Service, a program of Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Paper, 200 pages, $14.99; in Canada $22.29

Herald
Press

Orders: 1 800 759-4447 www.mph.org

MVS orientation largest in a decade

NEWTON, Kan.—Last month's Mennonite Voluntary Service orientation was the largest in recent history as 38 volunteers prepared for MVS assignments across North America.

MVS director Miles Reimer said the group was the largest in his experience with the organization, dating to 1990. The orientation also included six couples, a higher than usual number.

Orientation was held at Camp Mennoscah, a Mennonite camp near Murdock in south-central Kansas.—*GCMC and MBM news services*

Bethel College receives 10-year accreditation

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College in North Newton has received a 10-year accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Ten years is the longest accreditation granted by the NCA.

Among Bethel's strengths, the NCA review cited academic quality, strategic planning, gift support, facilities, student-oriented programs and services, and faculty, staff, administration and board. The review stressed the need for more students to maintain fiscal stability and also addressed issues of academic program reviews and campus diversity.

"This is a very, very fine evaluation and vote of confidence," says Bethel academic dean John Sheriff, who led the 18-month self-study that preceded NCA's on-site visit in February. "To receive this kind of recommendation at this time says that we are an extremely strong institution. It is a confirmation of who we say we are."

by the way ...

Germany is home to an estimated 80,000 Aussiedler (ethnic Germans from Russia) in 250 Anabaptist congregations.—*Christian Leader*

MBM grant to go for Native American consulting

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions has awarded $2,000 to semiretired Native American pastor Naswood Burbank to do consulting work with three congregations on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. The grant will allow him to travel for monthly meetings with Black Mountain, Upper Room and Blue Gap congregations, all members of Pacific Southwest Conference. Burbank, the first Native American ordained in the Mennonite Church, will consult on issues such as church growth, ministering to church issues and tribal problems such as alcohol and drug abuse and high employment rates.—*MBM News Service*

Eight students awarded MHS scholarships

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Health Services (MHS) has awarded eight Elmer Ediger Scholarships for the 1999-2000 academic year to students in the fields of mental health, counseling or developmental disabilities. Recipients of the $1,100 scholarships are:

Gregg Friesen, Newton, Kan., pursuing a master's degree in nursing, specializing in psychiatry, at Wichita (Kan.) State University; Anna Gossen, Fresno, Calif., pursuing a master's degree in counseling at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno; Jean-Marc Miller, Montreal, pursuing a master's degree in psychology at the University of Quebec, Montreal; Maribel Ramirez, Fresno, pursuing a master's degree in marriage and family therapy at MBBS; Jane Reble, Kitchener, Ont., pursuing a master's degree in social work at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ont.; Marla Schmidt, Lawrence, Kan., pursuing a master's degree in social welfare at the University of Kansas, Lawrence; Willi Wiebe, Abbotsford, B.C., pursuing a master's degree in counseling at Trinity Western University, Langley, B.C.; and Gregory Yoder, Fresno, Calif., pursuing a master's degree in marriage, family and child counseling at MBBS.

Rosedale gains degree-granting status

IRWIN, Ohio—For the first time in its history, Rosedale Bible Institute in Irwin is a degree-granting school. The Ohio Board of Regents has authorized RBI to grant associate of arts degrees in biblical studies. RBI, associated with the Conservative Mennonite Conference, had previously given certificates and diplomas to graduating students. Biblical studies is one of seven two-year programs offered by RBI.

Anabaptism & business today
How our faith shapes the way we do business

November 3-4, 1999
Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel
Norfolk, VA

What unique principles connect our Anabaptist faith tradition to modern business practices?

Join MEDA members and others for a focused conversation on the many ways our Anabaptist/Mennonite faith shapes the way we do business.

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Events

Southeast Conference annual meeting, Oct. 1-3, Brookville, Fla.

Franklin Conference annual meeting, Aug. 3, Chambersburg, Pa.

Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan., 125th anniversary celebration, Oct. 10. Speaker: Robert Kreider.

Western District Conference annual meeting, Oct. 22-23, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Atlantic Coast Conference annual meeting, Oct. 22-24, Elverson, Pa.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates convention, Nov. 4-7, Norfolk, Va. Contact 800-665-7026.

Workers

Armster, Michelle, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., as an MCC U.S. staff associate for urban peacemaking.

Booth, Michael, Philadelphia, is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Lancaster, Pa., as a church community worker.

Koontz, Esther, on July 31 concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

McLaughlin, Sandra, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as a shipping clerk with Ten Thousand Villages.

Births

Baer, Katie Stutzman, Aug. 22, to Jonathan and Sheila (Yoder) Baer, Villa Ridge, Mo.

Bauman, Jason Lynn, Aug. 27, to Brenda (Cassel) and Randy Bauman, Grantville, Pa.

Dutcher, Austin Chadwick, Aug. 19, to Chad and Marlene (Coblentz) Dutcher, Hartville, Ohio.

Funke, Quinn Allen, Aug. 12, to Jennifer (Cross) and Patrick Funke, Phoenix.

Hershberger, Aaron Eli, Aug. 22, to Eric and Krista (Derstine) Hershberger, Perkiomenville, Pa.

Hurst, Ethan Jon, Aug. 13, 1999, received for adoption Aug. 13 by Kathy (Farrell) and Mike Hurst, Lancaster, Pa.

Klinger, Ryan Michael, Aug. 11, to Linda and Neil Klinger, Archbold, Ohio.

Knarr, Jeffrey Allan, Aug. 3, to Beatrice (Geissinger) and Kenton Knarr, Bechtelsville, Pa.

Lichty, Herriott Jacob, July 17, to Emily Herriott and John Lichty, San Antonio, Texas.

Rittenhouse, Kaitlyn Esther, Aug. 26, to Janelle (Hartman) and John Rittenhouse, Telford, Pa.

Rodel, Ella Rose, Aug. 23, to Anne and Patrick Rodel, Gainesville, Fla.

Schrag, Benjamin Warren, Aug. 8, to Gale and Lisa (Ainsworth) Schrag, Denver.

Smith, Jordan Robert, July 30, to Amy (Moyer) and Michael Smith, Riegelsville, Pa.

Troyer, Gibson Doak, Aug. 28, to Doyle and LeAnn (Blenden) Troyer, Boise, Idaho.

Zimmerman, Benjamin Dale, Aug. 17, to Deb (Beck) and Mike Zimmerman, Archbold, Ohio.

Marriages

Bontrager/Showalter: Michele Bontrager, Hampton, Va., and Brian Showalter, Waynesboro, Va., Aug. 14 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Bucar/Peachey: Susan Bucar, Mount Pleasant, Pa., and Mark Peachey, Mount Pleasant, Aug. 14 at Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale, Pa.

Burkey/Yutzy: Krista Burkey, Lancaster, Pa., and Steven Yutzy, Lancaster, Aug. 28 at Elkhart, Ind.

Detweiler/Scardino: Jan Detweiler, Telford, Pa., and Erik Scardino, Souderton, Pa., Aug. 21 at Calvary Church of Souderton.

Ellison/White: Julie Ellison, Tavistock, Ont., and Mike White, New Hamburg, Ont., Aug. 21.

Graber/Kauffman: Kristin Graber, Lombard, Ill., and Travis Kauffman, Archbold, Ohio, July 3 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Herschberger/Liechty: Josh Herschberger, Topeka, Ind., and Becky Liechty, Archbold, Ohio, Aug. 21 at Archbold, Ohio.

Mast/Olinger: Sally Mast, Riverside, Iowa, and Eric Olinger, Toddville, Iowa, Aug. 21.

Ressor/Wyse: Scott Ressor, Hayworth, Ill., and Angie Wyse, Archbold, Ohio, Aug. 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Sauder/Thomas: Ryan Sauder, Pittsburgh, and Janelle Thomas, Pittsburgh, Aug. 13 at Pittsburgh.

Deaths

Beck, Elsie Eager, 78, Stryker, Ohio, died Aug. 27 of a stroke. Spouse: Floyd Beck (deceased). Parents: James and Erma Eager (deceased). Survivors: children James, Donald, Gregory, Judy Humes; 14 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Burkhart, Menno, 89, Brutus, Mich., died Aug. 19. Spouse: Mary Gregory Burkhart. Parents: Eli and Elizabeth Brubacher Burkhart (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruth Hartman, Naomi Bontrager, Linda Boyer, Wayne, Nancy Behan, Arnold, Marie; 14 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 22 at Maple River Mennonite Church, Brutus.

Gerber, Grace Arlene Weaver, 81, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Aug. 16. Spouse: Dean Gerber. Parents: Eli and Mary Ann Hershberger Weaver (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Yoder, Carol Christner, Paul, Wanda Mullet, Donna Weaver, Darryl, Janet Shoup; 15 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 20 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio.

Goertz, Marie Hiebert Ediger, 77, Goessel, Kan., died Aug. 19. Spouse: Alvin Goertz. Parents: Jacob and Mary Hiebert (deceased). Other survivors: children Earl Ediger, Lillian Enns; stepchildren David Goertz, Edith Schultz, Grace Hagen, Rebecca Allison; four grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Hildebrand, Vern, 57, Steinbach, Man., died Aug. 8 of cancer. Spouse: Mary Anne Hildebrand. Funeral: Aug. 12 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Gerald, 55, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 20 of liver cancer. Spouse: Joy Kropf Kauffman. Parents: Carl and Elizabeth Birky Kauffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Heidi, Karl, Troy; one grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 24 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Leis, Elton, 69, Tavistock, Ont., died Aug. 3 of pulmonary fibrosis. Spouse: Ellen Gerber Leis. Parents: Christian and Barbara Leis (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Holst, Brenda Wagler; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Tavistock.

Livengood, Harriet Louise Otto, 75, Springs, Pa., died Aug. 25. Spouse: Guy Livengood. Parents: Roy and Melda Maust Otto (deceased). Other survivors: children Noel, Donna Booten, Ann Critchfield; six grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 27 at Springs.

Miller, Ruby Jane, 57, Parnell, Iowa, died Aug. 26 of cancer. Spouse: Lyle Miller. Parent: Harold Yoder. Other survivors: children Kimberly, Phillip. Funeral: Aug. 28 at Parnell.

Nisley, Noah, 55, Berlin, Ohio, died Sept. 2 of cancer. Spouse: Susie Raber Nisley. Parents: Moses and Lydiann Stutzman Nisley (deceased). Other survivors: children Pam, Mark, Tim. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Berlin Mennonite Church.

Reeb, Barbara, 98, Eureka, Ill., died Sept. 1. Spouse: Carl Reeb (deceased). Parents: Christian and Barbara Detweiler (deceased). Survivors: children Leonard, Arlene Reeb Schrock; five grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Penner, Jacob, 75, Steinbach, Man., died Aug. 20 of bone cancer. Spouse: Helen Penner. Funeral: Aug. 24 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Rocke, Eileen, 78, Eureka, Ill., died Aug. 29. Spouse: (1st) Clarence Kennell (deceased), (2nd) Wilbur Rocke. Parents: Dan and Alice Yoder Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Gary Kennell, Eldon Kennell, Mary Lockart, Luella Eigsti; 10 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept 2 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Roth, Robert, 58, West Liberty, Ohio, died Aug. 22. Spouse: Linda Swartz Roth. Parents: Marcille Sites (deceased) and Christie Roth. Other survivors: children Matthew, Michelle. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Saltzman, Elma, 88, Shickley, Neb., died Aug. 19. Parents: J. B. and Barbara Lauber Saltzman (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 23 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Schrock-Overmeyer, Laura, 77, Shipshewana, Ind., died Aug. 26 of cancer. Spouse: (1st) Tobias Schrock (deceased); (2nd) Cleon Overmeyer. Parents: William and Clarice Young Lotz (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Maxine Miller, Walter Schrock; foster son: Terry Weed; seven grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Schweitzer, Nancy Meduna, 37, Beaver Crossing, Neb., died Aug. 18 of an aneurysm. Spouse: Don Schweitzer. Parents: Julius and Marcy Meduna. Other survivors: children Amber, Dan, Dean; one grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Yoder, Margaret Harshbarger, 87, Lansdale, Pa. died Aug. 20. Spouse: Chester Yoder. Parents: Edward and Maude Harshbarger (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Lois Zook; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Mattawana (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Correction: Albert Smith died at the age of 66. His age was incorrect in the July 20 issue.

classifieds

- **Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church:** ***40th anniversary celebration,*** Oct. 2-3, 1999. Solo concert by Tony Brown; speakers: Beryl Jantzi, Truman Brunk. For information email akronmench@aol.com

- **Visiting Orlando?** Five minutes from Epcot: ***private Mennonite-owned 2-bedroom home.*** Smoke-free; safe, quiet neighborhood. $750/wk, 25% to be donated to a charity of your choice. Call 1-800-999-2701.

- **Akron Mennonite Church,** a multistaffed congregation, seeks ***senior pastor*** with strong biblical, theological and human relations training from an Anabaptist perspective. M.Div. degree preferred.

  Send resume to Jerry Shank, 531 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522; email jeshank@redrose.net

- **International Guest House,** Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a one-year ***voluntary service assignment.*** For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Groffdale Mennonite Church,** Leola, Pa., seeks ***interim pastor.*** Preferred candidate will possess experience in biblical, theological and administrative leadership from an Anabaptist perspective for a multistaffed 250-member congregation. M.Div. preferred.

  Send resume to John Frey, 168 N. Groffdale Rd., Leola, PA 17540; 717-397-1523.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks a nearly retired Mennonite ***administrator*** who could work for two to three years as a semi-volunteer to oversee all school business management activities.

  For more information, please contact Polly Ann Brown, personnel committee chair, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118; 215-753-9295; email parfait@voicenet.com

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president of clinical services,*** a new position providing administrative supervision and guidance to various departments including health services. Qualifications include a college degree in health administration or related management field. Supervisory experience in long-term care preferred. Nursing Home Administrator license helpful.

  Submit resume to Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; or call 717-581-3936.

- **Enjoy living and serving in Oregon!** The Mennonite Home of Albany seeks applications for the position of ***executive director*** for this 500-resident accredited retirement community. The person selected will be in harmony with the Mennonite faith and life. He or she will have had successful experience in management in a retirement community and possess strong communication and human relations skills. A master's degree in health care or business administration or equivalent education will be helpful.

  Send resume or inquiry to Gene Kanagy, chair, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-924-9722 or 541-928-5541 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

- **Western Mennonite School** has the following openings for fall 1999:

  Assistant boys resident director (youth ministry position): Duties include mentoring, leading Bible studies, coordinating youth activities, discipling and supervising dorm students. This is an excellent opportunity for someone trained or interested in youth ministries. Full-time voluntary service; housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin immediately.

  Maintenance assistant (full-time voluntary service position): Carry out duties as assigned by head of maintenance to include maintenance and repair of buildings and grounds; vehicular maintenance skills preferred. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin November 1.

  Contact Darrel White, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Mennonite Aid Union of Kansas** seeks an ***underwriter/bookkeeper*** for its Hesston office. Qualifications include basic accounting, property/casualty experience, good computer skills and college degree. Responsible for processing applications, billing, receipts, filing, phones and meeting public.

  Submit resume to Larry Litwiller, P.O. Box 989, Hesston, KS 67062; fax 316-327-2108; email Llitwil@southwind.net

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by Gordon Houser

This column appears periodically as a way to pass on to our readers information about new books and other resources that may be helpful as we follow Jesus. We also include our recommendation of a book (right).

The 1999/2000 Mennonite Central Committee Resource Catalog describes audiovisual and printed resources available from MCC. For more information write to MCC, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

Family at Work: Building Strong Relationships at Home by Jim Kok (CRC Publications, 1999, $7.45) looks at the perils, pitfalls and richness of family life and offers tips for anyone who is part of a family.

Inheriting Paradise: Meditations on Gardening by Vigen Guroian (Eerdmans, 1999, $9) offers an abundant vision of the spiritual life found in the cultivation of God's good creation.

Servant Leadership for Church Renewal: Shepherds by the Living Springs by David S. Young (Herald Press, 1999, $12.99) shows a biblical style of servant leadership and how it can be applied in concrete situations.

Preach Peace and Pursue It: Peace Sermons by Canadian Mennonites, compiled by Jeremy Bergen (CMC, 1999, $8 plus shipping), contains 18 sermons, most preached in the late 1990s. To order call 800-665-1954.

Bioethics: A Critical Approach in a Pluralistic Age by Scott Rae and Paul Cox (Eerdmans, 1999, $24) is the first volume in a new series offering biblically informed perspectives on contemporary issues in bioethics.

She Has Done a Good Thing: Mennonite Women Leaders Tell Their Stories, edited by Mary Swartley and Rhoda Keener (Herald Press, 1999, $12.99), includes dramatic stories of 26 Mennonite women theologians, pastors, educators and administrators.

Pathways, edited by Wilma Derksen (Mennonite Central Committee Canada), is a bimonthly journal for victims of violence. For more information call 204-261-6381.

Painful Questions: Facing Struggles With Faith by Gary L. Watts (Herald Press, 1999, $12.99) deals with life's toughest questions.

Seeing Through Our Tears: Why We Cry, How We Heal by Daniel Bagby (Augsburg Fortress, 1999, $11.99) is a resource for people struggling to understand their emotions and what triggers them.

The Call to the Soul: Six Stages of Spiritual Development by Marjory Zoet Bankson (Innisfree Press, 1999, $14.95) offers a spiritual road map for people seeking to understand and nurture their spiritual growth.

Freedom Fences by Gerald W. Kaufman, L. Marlene Kaufman, Anne Kaufman Weaver and Nina Kaufman Harnish (Herald Press, 1999, $13.99) explores how to set limits that free you to enjoy your marriage and family.

Prairie People: Forgotten Anabaptists by Rod Janzen (University Press of New England, 1999, $24.95) is the first historical account of the noncommunal Hutterites, a group that represented two-thirds of those Hutterites who settled in North America in the 1870s.

The Comfort Series by Alvin Rogness (Augsburg Fortress, 1999, $4.99) is a set of four books based on Rogness' *Book of Comfort*. The four are *When You Are Suffering*, *When You Have Doubts*, *When Things Go Wrong* and *When You Are Afraid*.

Making Peace With Conflict: Practical Skills for Conflict Transformation, edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler (Herald Press, 1999, $14.99), is a practical guide to understanding and transforming conflict.

Recommended reading

Religious No More: Building Communities of Grace and Freedom by Mark D. Baker (InterVarsity Press, 1999, $14.99) shows the tendency of religion to create communities of "gracelessness, conditional acceptance, fear, lack of transparency and empathy, self-righteous line-drawing, and only superficial unity and ethical change." (See the editorial, next page.) While he addresses many of his concerns to fellow evangelicals, what he writes has application far beyond that community. Baker calls us to live in the freedom of the gospel, which recognizes that Christ has broken down all walls of separation.*—gh*

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Gordon Houser

The scandalous gospel of Christ

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.—Galatians 5:1

In spite of our talk, we have great difficulty believing the gospel. It goes against the grain to trust that we don't have to earn God's acceptance. We tend to keep ledgers in our hearts: He owes me. God hates me after what I've done. She's not one of us.

Jesus calls us to repent, change our minds: "The kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). But the gospel we too often preach is not good news but good rules.

Mark D. Baker, a theologian and Mennonite missionary in Honduras, has written a book that addresses this failure to believe and preach good news.

In *Religious No More: Building Communities of Grace and Freedom* (InterVarsity Press, 1999), he writes about the evangelical churches he observed in Las Mesetas, one of the numerous upstart neighborhoods around Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Begun and developed out of the missionary efforts of North American evangelicals, these churches exhibited fear, shame and exclusion.

Religion is a powerful temptation. It is an attempt to make rules and practices the basis for acceptance in God's family, when the gospel is directly opposed to this notion.

Baker writes: "The legalism of these churches creates communities characterized by gracelessness, conditional acceptance, fear, lack of transparency and empathy, self-righteous line-drawing, and only superficial unity and ethical change."

He goes on to look at Galatians and what it has to say about how easily religion distorts the gospel. Religion is a powerful temptation. It is an attempt to make rules and practices the basis for acceptance in God's family, when the gospel is directly opposed to this notion.

Baker writes: "The human religious drive leads people to distort a message of grace and continue to live as if they must earn the acceptance of God and the acceptance of others in their religious community."

Our individualistic culture strengthens this tendency toward religion. "A focus on religion," Baker writes, "necessarily leads to a central concern with an individual's actions. A focus on the individual may just as necessarily lead to religion."

We have tended to read Galatians in individualistic terms. But as a Hebrew, Paul thought more in terms of a covenant community. Members of that community are justified "because of Christ's faithfulness, which has led to the destruction of the barriers of separation."

We are adopted into God's family by God's grace, not by anything we've done or continue to do. Any gospel that preaches otherwise is a product of "this present evil age" (Galatians 1:4) and not the gospel of Christ.

Because Christ has broken down the walls of separation (Galatians 3:28), we are in a "new creation" (Galatians 6:15). Religious rules of inclusion are irrelevant. Baker writes: "It's like telling people already inside a stadium watching a football game that they have to buy a ticket to get in. They already are!"

We bristle against such freedom. We fear it will only lead to sin. What we don't recognize is that religion leads to destructive behavior. Baker writes that "if people are not secure in God's love, their alienation from God will lead them to live in ways that hurt others."

Living in God's "new creation" is not easy. We quickly fall into the old habits of "this present evil age," which wants to separate people. Christ unites us. Baker quotes Norman Kraus: "Paul's message is that Christ frees us from alienation and hostility, and destroys barriers of religious legalism so that we can relate to each other without these things."

Baker pictures religion as a thick-walled building. It may offer a sense of security, but it makes "communication, connection and caring difficult." It also fosters "a community of relational and ethical superficiality."

The Spirit of God, on the other hand, builds a "new-creation" tent that "promises the freedom to be open, honest and trusting of other people in ways that thick walls do not allow."

Let us live together in that freedom.—*gh*

the Mennonite

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the process of repentance

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10 Japanese Mennonites oppose military exercises

16 When Amy meets Peter

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Addressing atonement

With sincere appreciation for much in the presentations by J. Denny Weaver ("The Theology of Jesus Christ in the Margins," Aug. 31, and "The Reign of God Made Visible in Jesus," Sept. 7), I still have some differences. Anabaptist thought was not a rejection of orthodoxy but an interpretation. True, the reign of God was made visible in Jesus, but essentially the reconciling grace of God was also actualized in Jesus. Jesus said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." This is the Good News, and less than this is a truncated gospel.

We need not reject Nicea and Chalcedon in order to have a theology of peace and active nonviolence. A theology of peace is actually founded on the redemptive work of God, who so loved the world as to give his only son, who suffered for his enemies as well as at the hands of his enemies and overcame hostility by self-giving love on the cross (Ephesians 2:14-18).

Our message as Anabaptists is to accept the whole Jesus, who revealed God to us. We reject the truncated approach of much of Christendom, which only wanted certain benefits from Jesus but did not want to join in solidarity with Christ. While I believe there are other theories that better interpret the cross, our problem with Anselm's satisfaction theory of atonement is not with the truth that Jesus' death was sufficient for our forgiveness and reconciliation, but that his death was reduced to a mere economic payment or penalty for sin rather than a reconciliation with God for a new quality of life. This new life is with Jesus to make the reign of God visible in our lives as disciples. —*Myron S. Augsburger, Harrisonburg, Va.*

I appreciated Weaver's articles on atonement. Jesus was persecuted for righteousness' sake, and Christians are called to take up our crosses and follow him, not to think of Jesus as someone who experienced suffering so his followers can avoid it.

Some Mennonites claim belief in the Trinity is essential for salvation but that rejection of the sword isn't. Weaver seems to be saying the opposite since he suggests that the Nicene-Chalcedonian theology is marginal to the story of Jesus and that the rejection of the sword is integral (although Weaver does this without personally suggesting any lack of belief in the Trinity). I look forward to reading his forthcoming book.—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

Weaver says that racism is a form of "violence just as surely as violence with guns. So are poverty ... and patriarchy" (Sept. 7). This statement is politically correct in academia, but it cheapens violence. Our American Heritage Dictionary defines racism as "the notion that one's own ethnic stock is superior" and violence as "physical force for the purpose of violating, damaging or abusing." It should (but doesn't) go without saying that a wrong idea is not identical to a harmful action; otherwise a simplistic semantic confusion substitutes tyranny (Orwell's thought control) for our whole legal system, which is meant partly to protect the poor. Thoughts can lead to actions, but the distinction is still indispensable.

I strongly support Weaver's claim that "if the church is not confronting injustice, then it is not being the church." But I would say injustice includes types ignored academically. —*Ronald Rich, Bluffton, Ohio*

I appreciate Weaver's exposition of James Cone's *God of the Oppressed* and the lessons to be learned from sharing different viewpoints and experiences (Sept. 7). I do not appreciate the implication that Mennonites and blacks should dialogue, as if the two groups were completely separate, ignoring the existence of our black Mennonite brothers and sisters.—*Martha Yoder Maust, Indianapolis*

Saturday night special

Don Steelberg needs to lighten up (Readers Say, Sept. 7). Must every hymn we sing at a convention be fraught with ultimate meaning in order to be justified as singable? Can't we sing some things just for the fun of it? I agree that not every hymn we sang would have been my choice. I enjoyed watching others sing some hymns I could not enjoy. Ken Nafziger and Marilyn Houser Hamm were wonderful in pulling the best out of all 5,000 of us.

I am puzzled by Steelberg's critique of the Saturday evening service at St. Louis 99, which he found to be the "low point of the convention" because we prayed for the healing and release of others while ignoring our own "hurtful blindness, which was such a focal point of the business sessions." We had amicable business sessions on Friday and Saturday, in which some important decisions were made. So I am amazed that we should have known about our hurtful blindness at that point. I agree that the hurtful blindness came later, with the fiasco of that vote on the last

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readers say

day. Surely Tuesday was a lower point than Saturday evening.—*Melvin D. Schmidt, Hyattsville, Md.*

I want to affirm the worship planners and leaders for St. Louis 99. Yes, our worship focus was on praising God, moving forward as a denomination and the joy of life in Christ, including at times a focus on heaven, rather than on our own divisiveness. This focus, however, does not necessarily imply that the worship was "escapist and manipulative," as Steelberg suggests. For me the times of worship were a sign of hope for unity, and a wonderful contrast to the heavy and sometimes conflictual business sessions.

While I agree with Steelberg that it would have been good to include in the Saturday evening service an expression of our need for healing within our own body, that worship service was still a high point of the week for me. It seems to me that rather than have our worship reflect the mood of our business sessions, a much better goal would be to have our business sessions reflect the mood and spirit of our times of worship.—*Kevin T. Goertzen, Goessel, Kan.*

Lack of understanding

The Aug. 17 editorial ("What Must It Be Like to Feel Like God?") refers to the granting of free will to humankind as a limiting factor in what God can do to avert disasters, tragic death, etc. This bothers us a lot, but we cannot have it both ways. "How could God allow something like this to happen?" is indeed a sign of our lack of understanding, not of God's lack of understanding. He cries with us for all the tragedies of our lives. He is always with us trying to enable us to make choices which are for life and not for death.—*Lorne Buhr, Edmonton*

Cover photo
by Dale D. Gehman, EMM

Repentance is an ongoing process

by Dorcas Cyster

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Dorcas Cyster

Why should I, a Christian, be concerned with breaking down the barriers that separate me racially, ethnically or culturally from my brothers and sisters? It's easier to live within boundaries that my culture, family or church experiences set for me and just believe we're all one. Far easier than venturing out of my comfort zone and running the risk of discovering how controlling I usually am, or worse yet, that I am racist, or ethnocentric to a fault.

Now, after living out of my comfort zone for more than 18 years, I have claimed God's grace sufficient to redeem my racism, arrogance and sin as part of my journey with him—a journey of confession, repentance, forgiveness and hence greater intimacy with God.

In my religious background, repentance was a once-and-done experience, and you were "saved." It was a negative word to me, although being saved was a positive experience. Perhaps this is common and has some good results. However, seeing repentance as an ongoing process in one's life is more effective, though costly.

Sooner or later we're all confronted with our racism—through a new family who moves next to us, a newly hired co-worker, our children's friends or maybe the possibility that our family will become biracial. The first step in working through these feelings is acknowledging that we are racially prejudiced, that our racism is a sin we need to confess, then work through in repentance, knowing God's forgiveness is sure.

Sooner or later we're all confronted with our own racism—through a new family who moves next to us, a newly hired co-worker, our children's friends or maybe the possibility that our family will become biracial.

My initial conversion to Christ was through a fire-and-brimstone sermon at the age of 11. I will never minimize the significance of that experience, but today I see it as only the first step rather than the last.

At 16, I accepted the call of the Lord in a profound way as I committed myself to God's service in whatever he had for me. Little did I realize the consequences of the commitment I made that day as I lifted to God the prayer of my heart.

In the spring of 1979, at the age of 23, I left the safe haven of home in Reading, Pa., for Jackson, Miss. Two years earlier, I had left the church of my childhood and youth to fellowship in and assist a small Mennonite church "on the other side of the tracks." The call to identify with the outcasts and social minorities was evident. This group of African-American, Hispanic and white brothers and sisters encouraged me in my decision to travel to Mississippi to assist in youth ministry and community development.

Empty and powerless: I arrived in Jackson, thinking I had much to give to this low-income, oppressed black community. But after a few weeks, I felt empty and powerless to change the situation. I remember looking out my second-story window late at night on the din and activity that never stopped, weeping and asking the Lord what I could do.

What could I do to stop the epidemic of early teenage pregnancy, the drug-dealing and abuse, the gang fights and police brutality, the cycle of poverty and oppression that paralyzed that entire community? What could I do to save or help rebuild the torn relationships that divided brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, parents and children? What could I do to help dispel the fear and superiority white folks felt toward blacks, and the hate, anger and inferiority black people felt toward whites? I found within myself few answers to these factors that rendered that community impotent and powerless to rebuild itself.

As this reality became evident, I had to re-evaluate my religious, cultural and social beliefs and values. As I opened myself to be challenged, confronted (sometimes by angry people) and sometimes misunderstood, I saw my need for repentance for the many years of not knowing and not wanting to know but rather enjoying my own comfort. I needed to repent of corporate sin, not only of white racism but the benefits and privileges available as a result of exploitation of and insensitivity to what some called the "little people of society."

Challenged myths: The author (second from right) leads a Bible study in a "mixed-race" community. Graham, her husband, is at right.

Often I wanted to opt out and go back where I had come from; it was too painful and too hard to go through all this. I thank God for several individuals who hung in with me, particularly my late brother-in-law, Spencer Perkins, an African-American, who told me: "As long as you feel you want to get out, stay. It means you still have more to learn."

I finally came to the place where I felt at peace and at home. There are no shortcuts to discover where redemption still needs to happen. I was in Mississippi for seven years, but I had only begun.

The next step came in January 1986, when I married Graham Cyster, a South African from Cape Town whom I had met earlier in Jackson. He was on his way back to his homeland in late February 1986 to begin a ministry of healing and reconciliation. South Africa was in intense turmoil, with the oppressed majority becoming more aggressive in its efforts to throw off the yoke of apartheid.

The South African government responded with harsh, repressive measures—like Mississippi in the extreme. Racism was incorporated into laws, which affected all of life.

We were married only nine months after the law prohibiting mixed marriages was repealed. Later, the birth of our first child in a South African hospital threw the staff into a quandary. Since hospitals were strictly segregated, they didn't know what floor to put us on.

Interracial community: Graham and I were involved in a ministry that challenged the political, social and religious structures as we endeavored to establish an interracial community. We were often isolated, since what we represented to people was too controversial and challenged myths with which they were so comfortable.

We were living proof that people of different races could live and work together. I say this with humility, because I know only the grace of God enabled us to face the racial and cultural differences, which surfaced in our relationship. Many were and continue to be painful to work through, but the pain lessens as we learn to sit lightly on many "right and wrong" ways to do things and realize that most solutions are just "different."

We returned to the United States about two years ago, after 11½ years in South Africa. The spirit of repentance enabled me to build the kind of relationships across racial lines that few white South Africans have. I feel so rich and blessed that I had these experiences in South Africa and in other diverse cultures.

I am still learning. My involvement in different capacities in the inner city of Lancaster, Pa., continues to keep the challenge alive, that in my weakness Christ is made strong.

Dorcas (Horst) Cyster lives in Lancaster, Pa., with her husband, Graham, and their two daughters, Elena and Amanda. They are members of South Christian Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster. This article is reprinted with permission from Missionary Messenger, *April 1999.*

The birth of our first child in a South African hospital threw the staff into a quandary. Since hospitals were strictly segregated, they didn't know what floor to put us on.

Challenge for a scientist

by Glenna Holloway

In a time men call the beginning
there was unbridled light, too pure,
too intense for any but God's eyes.
A time of mass and matter,
warring and waiting—God's playthings—
molded and willed and flung
from dawn to forever.

Now you pry with derived light,
breaking creation's codes,
telling us how Earth and life happened.

Finding at last it was no accident,
teach us life's WHY.
Equip us to receive molten truth,
to transmit it unaltered.

Locate the lost language of holiness,
discover synonyms for praise. Give us
new words, wrested from granite,
born burning, tempered on glaciers,
cut and polished with diamonds.

To be spoken by men in whispers.

Glenna Holloway lives in Naperville, Ill.

4. Why integration?

A biblical

by Ervin R. Stutzman

What might the apostle Paul have to say about integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church and about the discussions we had at St. Louis this past July? Of course, we can only guess, but here's a conversation I can imagine with him.

Ervin: Thank you, Paul, for all those letters you wrote to the churches way back in the first century. We find direction, inspiration and hope in what God said through you.

Paul: Thank you. But, as the least of the apostles, I want all of the credit to go to the Spirit of God.

Ervin: It's encouraging to know that God's Spirit really does enable us in our weakness, especially when we find ourselves coming to the end of our rope.

Paul: I can identify with that. There were times when I thought I couldn't take one more step. Then God came through in ways I couldn't have imagined.

Ervin: We're looking for that kind of help right now in the new Mennonite Church USA. We're working to bring together two Mennonite expressions of the body of Christ in the United States. We've been cooperating with each other but find that we still have some significant differences. Now those differences threaten to divide us in new ways.

Paul: Divisions are not new in the body. We dealt with them at Corinth as well as in the Galatian region—members fighting over divided loyalties and different doctrinal beliefs. I warned them, "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

Ervin: It feels like we're on the verge of having that happen in our denomination. Or more likely, people just splitting off and going their own way. The irony is that this whole integration process was started as a demonstration of unity in the body of Christ. Now the very thing that we hoped would demonstrate our unity threatens to break us into even more factions.

Paul: Unity is very important. You probably remember what I told the Ephesian church: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." There's only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ervin: Those words of yours have been quoted more than once in this discussion. But we can't seem to agree on the basis of our unity. For some of us, unity means that we join forces in one church organization. Others of us are looking for more basic doctrinal agreement, particularly on lifestyle issues. We remember your counsel to the Corinthian church about that man who was sleeping with his father's wife. You exhorted them to hand him over to Satan lest his sin spread through the church like yeast in a lump of dough. And you admonished them not even to associate with professing Christians who live immoral lives. I take that as a strong word of exclusion against a person who would have preferred to stay in the fellowship. How does this relate to the need for unity?

Paul: I feared for the unity of the group if we didn't take action against that man who was flaunting his wrong behavior. Yet it was a difficult course of action. I'm grateful to report that

As a result of this "conversation," I've renewed several commitments:
- to confess, with Paul, that I am deeply in need of God's redemptive grace,
- to hold up the biblical standard of a pure and holy life,
- to extend healing and hope to others caught in sin and brokenness,
- to agree and disagree with others in love, and
- to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.—*Ervin R. Stutzman*

This is the last of four articles exploring reasons for integrating the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. In this issue, Ervin Stutzman looks at spiritual and biblical reasons for integrating. *—the editors*

perspective

A plea for the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace

it worked out well in the end. Not only he but the congregation repented of their attitude about the whole thing. It was hard on me, too. I really regretted the hurt that came out of that, but it produced the repentance that was needed.

Ervin: The issue we're struggling with is membership for congregations who allow noncelibate same-sex relationships. I'm sure you have something to say about that. You apparently dealt with same-sex issues at Rome as well as Corinth.

Paul: Certainly. I warned the Corinthian church that neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Ervin: That's quite a list. It includes a lot more than sins committed in same-sex relationships.

Paul: Of course. Homosexual sin does not belong in a category by itself. We had people come into the church at Corinth with many different sins in their background. But they were washed, they were sanctified, they were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Ervin: Not everyone in our churches agrees on what constitutes sexual sin. And even when we agree on definitions of sin, we don't always agree on the best pastoral response to people caught in sin.

Paul: Sexual involvement outside the marriage covenant between a man and a woman is sin. Of course, you know what I told the Galatians: "If anyone is detected in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore such a one gently."

Ervin: Yes, and we are aware of your strong teaching that we are saved by grace, not by our own good works. As Mennonites, we've tended to emphasize the importance of good works as an expression of our faith. We've been accused of being too legalistic. To be truthful, some of us feel like some Christians in other denominations may have taken your teaching on justification by faith a little too far.

Paul: You remember how I blasted the Galatians on their legalistic tendencies. It is only by God's grace that we (especially I who persecuted the church) stand justified by faith. But it's also true that faithful disciples of Jesus Christ show the fruit of the Spirit in their lives—love, joy, peace, patience and so on. And they show evidence of holiness. When I pray for people, I ask God to make them holy in every way—spirit, soul and body.

Ervin: This integration process certainly requires plenty of Spirit fruit from everyone involved. It's hard for me not to run out of patience with the whole process. Yet I know I'm called to keep loving those people with whom I disagree. And I'm trying to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," to borrow a phrase of yours.

Paul: Good. Keep in mind that the Lord Jesus himself said that people would recognize his disciples by their love for one another. I told the Corinthians (who were always fighting) that love is the most excellent way. Love is patient and kind. It isn't boastful, envious or proud. It is not rude, self-seeking or easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. It does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Ervin: I long to see that kind of love expressed in the life of our church.

Paul: God can make it happen by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ervin: We all pray fervently to that end.

Ervin Stutzman, Mount Joy, Pa., is moderator of Lancaster Conference and a professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. He is also moderator-elect of the new Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

Keep in mind that the Lord Jesus himself said that people would recognize his disciples by their love for one another. I told the Corinthians (who were always fighting) that love is the most excellent way.

—Paul

Envisioning a brave new world conference

As church changes, MWC increases scope of activities

MWC photo by Merle Good

Mennonite World Conference president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia (left) and vice president Bedru Hussein of Ethiopia pray during last month's MWC Executive Committee meetings in Indonesia.

BANDUNGAN, Indonesia—As its list of assignments grows and as its members ask for ways to develop new relationships, Mennonite World Conference is embarking on a plan to expand its mission. Long known as the organizer of international assemblies every six years or so, MWC is moving into activities such as global get-togethers, ecumenical dialogue, exchange programs and publishing.

At its Aug. 19-25 meeting in Bandungan, MWC's 14-member Executive Committee unanimously endorsed the continued broadening of the organization's work, including adding staff, raising funds for the increased work and a possible review of its constitution.

"We need to change in our organization in order to accomplish the work of God in our world," president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia said in his opening remarks at the meeting.

MWC is increasingly being seen as where the global Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church can work together interdependently. A variety of such efforts are already under way, while others are still being formulated by staff. Such projects include:

- A Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation, sponsored by MWC and North American mission and service agencies, to be held next July in Latin America. Participants, coming from all five continents, will explore working together and being accountable to each other in international missions.
- The Global Gifts Sharing Project, an inventory of gifts and resources in member churches. "MWC is creating the list," says MWC executive secretary Larry Miller. "Then, for example, the church in the Philippines can enter into direct contact with the church in Guatemala. They don't need to go through us."
- The Global Church Sharing Fund, which has distributed funds to churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Tanzania, the money has been used to establish an investment house. In Congo, the money has been used to buy bicycles for evangelists.
- The Global Mennonite and Brethren in Christ History Project, a multivolume effort which will produce a history of the church on each continent. The first, on Latin America, is now being researched.
- Formal contact with other world church bodies. MWC sent a representative to a summer meeting of the General Council of the Baptist World Alliance, and a second Mennonite-Catholic dialogue will be held Oct. 12-18.

To finance the increased activity, MWC this fall will start a major fund-raising campaign: $250,000 a year for the next five years. Rather than making a broad appeal, MWC staff will approach a small number of individuals around the world.

"We are operating on the thinnest of margins now," said treasurer Paul Quiring of the United States. "We can't respond to any unexpected opportunities or needs. That is not responsible."

MWC also plans next year to hire an associate executive secretary to assist with new projects. The intent is to hire a person from Africa, Asia or Latin America. Miller, the executive secretary, is a native of the United States now living in France.

These moves will test whether MWC can grow substantially stronger while continuing to function primarily as an encourager and facilitator of its members' activities.

"We are all enthusiastic now," said Stefan van Delden of Germany. "Let's not overdo it by trying more than we can handle. But it's good to be moving this way for the sake of the global church."—*Phyllis Pellman Good of MWC News Service*

Zimbabwe favorite for MWC assembly

The Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Executive Committee is recommending Zimbabwe as the site of the next international assembly.

The recommendation now goes to the MWC General Council, made up of representatives from each MWC member church. The council will next meet in July 2000.

An invitation from Ethiopia had also been received to host the event, scheduled for August 2003. But Ethiopian Bedru Hussein, MWC's vice president, advised going elsewhere.

"Ethiopia remains at war with Eritrea, and we don't know how long that will go on," he said at last month's Executive Committee meeting in Bandungan, Indonesia. "That makes planning a problem."

Zimbabwe is home to more than 20,000 Mennonites, according to MWC figures. Africa has never hosted an MWC assembly.—*MWC News Service*

Convention highlights breadth of elementary, secondary education

CHEVY CHASE, Md.—Education doesn't end with eighth grade. Nor does it start with the freshman year in high school. Administrators at Mennonite elementary and secondary schools say what they provide and issues they address span kindergarten through grade 12. That's why the Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC) and Mennonite Elementary Education Council (MEEC) will hold their first joint convention Sept. 30-Oct. 2 in Chevy Chase.

"There's something missing when elementary and secondary meet separately," says MEEC chair John Weber, principal at Kraybill Mennonite School, Mount Joy, Pa. "Meeting separately, we tend to do our own talking and not really be aware of another level."

Organizers were hoping for 500 registrants. What they got were 630, with more inquiries still coming. That indicates a need for such a venue, says planning committee chair Elaine Moyer, principal at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, Lansdale, Pa. While MSEC has been holding regular conferences, this is the first for MEEC, some of whose members have been attending other conferences for educators at religious schools. "This would be the only conference out there for us as [Mennonite] K-12 educators," Moyer says.

Such education, she says, takes place in the context of "peace, justice, service—the things we really want our youth of the next generation to be challenged by."

The convention, to be held at the National 4-H Center, will include workshops on topics such as postmodernism, diversity, global perspectives, peace, literature and the arts. Keynote speakers will be Bill Hawk, professor and former administrator at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; Ernie Martin, teacher and administrator at Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg; Dale Schrag, secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council; and Kathy Short, professor at the University of Arizona, Tucson.

MSEC and MEEC will also hold separate sessions. MSEC plans to accept its 15th member school, Shalom Christian Academy, Chambersburg, Pa.

MEEC has 23 member schools. One school, Belleville (Pa.) Mennonite School, is a member of both councils. A number of the MSEC members also have junior high schools.

Future joint conventions will be held every two years.—*Rich Preheim*

EMM photo by Martha Zimmerly

Cutting and sowing

Francesco Scardina (left) demonstrates a hairdressing technique on Florbensa Llupo while hairdresser Laureta Kamani looks on. Scardina, a hairdresser and Mennonite pastor from Palermo, Italy, and his wife, Laura, last month visited Lushnje, Albania, to teach hairdressing skills to a group of self-taught hairdressers and to share their faith. The venture was supported by the Italian Evangelical Mennonite Church, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. Each day of instruction began with devotions, and Scardina preached at a service where three students received diplomas. He also preached at a Sunday morning service.

Taiwanese Mennonites shaken but unharmed after quake

NEWTON, Kan.—The Taiwanese Mennonite churches and their members survived the Sept. 21 earthquake which rocked the country, according to initial reports.

The Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT) has 18 congregations and about 1,200 members. The only report so far of church damage came from a church in Taichung, the region where most of the deaths occurred.

"Pastor Lu said a few bricks fell down but [nothing] severe," wrote FOMCIT secretary Theresa Chen in an email to the Commission on Overseas Mission office in Newton.

The house of one member in Taichung collapsed, but no one was injured.

Meanwhile, four staff members from Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien are bound for Puli, a small city at the quake's epicenter, to assist a hospital there.—*GCMC News Service*

Ohio church doubles at ball tournament

For only the second time in the 22 years of the Indiana Mennonite Softball Tournament, the same congregation took home the men's and women's titles.

The annual event, held in Fort Wayne during Labor Day weekend, is a fund-raiser for Mennonite Central Committee. Final dollar figures are not yet available. Last year's tournament raised about $3,000 for MCC.

Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio, won the women's division, going undefeated in the tournament and downing North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind., in the final game. The Pleasant View men came out of the loser's bracket to twice beat Mennonite Christian Assembly, Fredericksburg, Ohio, for the championship.

The only other time the same congregation won both the men's and women's titles in the same year was in 1992, when Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., accomplished it.

This year's tournament drew 62 men's and 13 women's teams from seven states.

Japanese Mennonites want to enlist help of U.S. church to stop military exercises

> Saying yes to the military means saying yes to killing, and it leads us to disregard the dignity of our lives, each of which has been given by God.
>
> —*Kosuke Saeki*

BEKKAI, Japan—Even though their community isn't at war with the United States, residents of Bekkai this month had to endure 10 days of shelling.

For the third consecutive year, the U.S. Marine Corps in mid-Septemer descended on this remote mountainous region for live-fire training exercises. In return, Bekkai has been promised $1.7 million to boost its struggling economy.

But for Kosuke Saeki and other members of Bekkai Mennonite Church, the agreement has ominous overtones.

"The city government is delighted to say that the money will revitalize the underpopulated city," he says. "However, I see it as dangerous to depend on a military-related favor to strengthen the public finance of the city. Saying yes to the military means saying yes to killing, and it leads us to disregard the dignity of our lives, each of which has been given by God."

The Marines last year fired more than 5,800 live rounds of artillery shells in 10 days. The exercises created sufficient noise pollution to significantly damage milk production in the area, which is economically dependent on its dairy industry, Saeki says. Residents were also concerned about the effects of harmful phosphorus and ethane chloride chemicals that are released by the smoke bombs used.

"If the live-fire exercises go on, we cannot escape the destruction of the environment," Saeki says. "Our dairy farming [community] will turn into a barren land."

Saeki and other church members have repeatedly voiced their concerns to the unhearing ears of local city and Marine Corps officials. Now Saeki has turned to a different tactic. Using his computer expertise to create a web site, he wants to raise awareness in the United States of the situation.

Because the Japanese cannot protest directly to Washington, the hope is that "U.S. citizens, especially Mennonite brothers and sisters, will express their opposition to the U.S. government," says Mary Beyler, a longtime Mennonite Board of Missions worker in the region who talked about the protests during a visit to the United States this summer.

"I have read that the Japanese government is becoming more militaristic," Beyler says. "I want my U.S. Mennonite brothers and sisters to know that the U.S. government is putting a lot of pressure on the Japanese government to go in that direction."

The damage from the military exercises is not limited to Bekkai, she says. "Other towns agreed [to host exercises] because of vast amounts of money from the United States and Japan," Beyler says, noting that those locations are generally low-income, agricultural areas with no industry.

The Bekkai exercises started in 1997, when, in the face of longstanding protests, the Marines relocated their live-fire training from the highly populated southern island of Okinawa to five outlying Japanese military bases.

Saeki's web site can be found at www.aurens.or.jp/hp/saeki/index3.html.
—*MBM News Service*

Indonesians get MCC assistance to respond to regional woes

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee has given $10,000 to an Indonesian Mennonite effort to help people displaced by violence in East Timor and on the island of Ambon.

At their recent general assembly, members of the GKMI Mennonite synod took an offering and then invited other Mennonite groups to add contributions. The money will go to the Indonesia Council of Churches, which is providing food, tents, medical care, clean water and pressurized lamps for displaced people from East Timor and Ambon.

On Ambon, 37,000 Muslims have fled their homes after clashes related to religion and ethnicity.—*MCC News Service*

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The Mennonite editor to leave position in 2000

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—After a quarter century in Mennonite journalism, during which he helped launch two magazines, *The Mennonite* editor J. Lorne Peachey has announced he will step down next summer.

A search committee is being formed to find a successor for *The Mennonite,* the magazine Peachey has directed since it first appeared in February 1998. His term as editor ends on Aug. 31, 2000, although he could leave the position earlier, depending on the hiring of a new editor.

A statement from Cheryl Zehr Walker, chair of the Interim Periodical Board, which oversees *The Mennonite,* gives three reasons for Peachey's decision:

- time for a new editorial voice;
- desire for a "lower-stress, lower-profile position" as he nears retirement;
- health concerns of Emily, his wife.

"Lorne Peachey has worked to ensure that the people of the transforming Mennonite Church find both spiritual nurture and a voice in *The Mennonite,*" Walker said in a statement. "He has shown himself to be a gifted communications leader and a person of unwavering faithfulness, gentle courage and active optimism. The church will miss him immensely as one of its most eloquent messengers."

Peachey was the founding editor of the Mennonite youth magazine *With,* serving from 1968 to 1974. He edited *Christian Living* for the next 10 years before joining Pennsylvania Mennonite Credit Union in 1984. Peachey returned to journalism in 1990, when he became editor of *Gospel Herald,* a position he held until 1998, when the magazine ceased publication and was replaced by the new *The Mennonite,* the U.S. periodical for the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church.

Peachey says his goal in church journalism has been to help make the church inviting to outsiders as Jesus was to everyone who met him. "If that has happened just a little bit," he says, "then I'll leave the job content."

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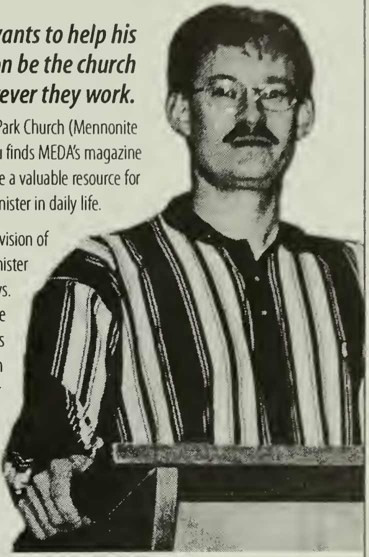

Dave Esau wants to help his congregation be the church wherever they work.

As pastor of the Cedar Park Church (Mennonite Brethren) in Delta, B.C., Esau finds MEDA's magazine *The Marketplace* to be a valuable resource for equipping people to minister in daily life.

"It has expanded my own vision of how God calls us to minister wherever we work," he says. "And it gives me a double blessing when I share stories from it with my congregation and see their vision for ministry expand also."

"I want to promote ministry in daily life," says Esau. "That's why I'm part of MEDA."

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Retreat fosters inter-group peace in conflicted Russian region

VLADIKAVKAZ, Russia—Because of ethnic conflict and prejudice, Russia's North Caucasus region has long been home to intense intergroup mistrust and hatred. Brutal wars have pitted neighbor against neighbor.

But an Aug. 8-15 retreat sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee tried to bring peace and understanding among groups. The retreat, for church leaders in the region, focused on "understanding and living creatively with conflict," says MCC worker Dan Hess.

He reported lively participation in the seminars. "But more significant were the fellowship and interaction taking place," he says. "During free time, participants played spirited volleyball games and hiked into the … mountains. Late into the night the group would gather over tea."—*MCC News Service*

Speaker: Put poor people in political debate

GOSHEN, Ind.—Something is wrong when 86 percent of the profits in the nation's largest companies are going to only 10 percent of the people, says Jim Wallis.

Rather than helping all boats, "it's a rising tide that is lifting all yachts," the author, preacher and activist told a Goshen College audience Sept. 14.

Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*, said the keys to economic justice are faith and political leaders listening to what he called faith-based organizations. Wallis leads one such organization, Call to Renewal, which has been in contact with presidential candidates Bill Bradley, George W. Bush and Al Gore.

"We're interacting with all three leaders, but we want them to understand what we're doing," Wallis said. "We're not going to endorse any of the three, but our agenda is putting poor people in the political debate."

Grant to expand MEDA work in Pennsylvania

LANCASTER, Pa.—The state of Pennsylvania has awarded Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) a $150,000 grant to help low-income people create or strengthen businesses in the state.

The grant will be used to create programs based on MEDA's ASSETS program, which works with churches and community groups to help low-income people start or strengthen small businesses. There are four MEDA-supported ASSETS programs in Pennsylvania. With the grant money, MEDA hopes to have 10 by 2002. One potential program is in Philadelphia, in cooperation with a consortium of Mennonite congregations and organizations in the city.—*MEDA News Service*

MHS makes financial awards to nursing students

GOSHEN, Ind.—Five postgraduate nursing students have received Miller-Erb Nursing Development Fund grants or loans, awarded by Mennonite Health Services. The following recipients each receive $1,000 to $2,000 for the 1999-2000 academic year:

Mary J. Dyck, Goodfield, Ill., doctoral student at the University of Iowa, Iowa City; Ann Graber Hershberger, Linville, Va., doctoral student at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville; Amanda Leigh Johnson, Marion, Kan., master's degree student at Wichita (Kan.) State University; Brenda Srof, Goshen, doctoral student at Loyola University, Chicago; and Violet Horst, Harrisonburg, Va., enrolled in a post-master's degree pediatric nurse practitioner program.

by the way ...

At 1,512 pages, the *Martyrs' Mirror* printed by the Ephrata (Pa.) Cloister in the mid-18th century was the largest single book published in colonial America.—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*

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Births

Derstine, Aidan Michael, Sept. 1, to Lucy (Schiedel) and Michael Derstine, Perkasie, Pa.

Emery, Weston Grant and Whitney Grace (twins), Aug. 17, to Erik and Kimberly (Socia) Emery, Fairview, Mich.

Groff, Tyler James, Aug. 23, to Marlin and Nancy (Mohler) Groff, Lititz, Pa.

Huebert, Lane Alan, Sept. 9, to Lynn and Melissa (Thieszen) Huebert, Henderson, Neb.

Landis, Joshua Alexander, Oct. 18, 1998, received for adoption July 22, 1999, by Cheryl (Freed) and Jeffrey Landis, Meridian, Miss.

Landis, Katya Janae, June 4, 1997, received for adoption July 22, 1999, by Cheryl (Freed) and Jeffrey Landis, Meridian, Miss.

Martin, Caleb Kenneth, Aug. 24, to Paula and Troy Martin, Newport News, Va.

Mast, Bailee Nicole, Aug. 25, to Wendy (Beachy) and Jeff Mast, Sarasota, Fla.

McDaniel, Aaron Joshua, Aug. 18, to Darrell and Michelle (Voth) McDaniel, Newton, Kan.

Miller, Elijah E., Aug. 11, to Gene and Tina (Hooper) Miller, Bradenton, Fla.

Moe, Victoria Louise, Aug. 11, to Janelle (Hofer) and Steve Moe, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Myers, Dante, Aug. 28, to Brian and Michelle (Nemeth) Myers, Hollsopple, Pa.

Nolt, Caleb Seth, July 25, to Julia (Miller) and Rich Nolt, Lititz, Pa.

Nouri, Emma Sprunger, Sept. 3, to Mary (Sprunger) and Rachid Nouri, Harrisonburg, Va.

Nunemaker, Trenten Dale, Aug. 27, to Travis and Trista (Zook) Nunemaker, Middlebury, Ind.

Ruby, Vanessa Lynn, Aug. 13, to Agatha and Eric Ruby, Tavistock, Ont.

Yoder, Jeremy Wade, Aug. 26, to Chadwin and Jenny (Loux) Yoder, Silverdale, Pa.

Zuercher, Isaiah Clemens, Aug. 27, to Andrea and Ian Clemens Zuercher, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Beitzel/Lehman: Alise Beitzel and Galen Lehman, Dalton, Ohio, Aug. 28 at Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Crossgrove/Yoder: Ruth Ann Crossgrove, Stryker, Ohio, and Harold Yoder, Archbold, Ohio, Sept. 4 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Hunsberger/Kanagy: Joann Hunsberger, Perkasie, Pa., and Matthew Kanagy, Ypsilanti, Mich., Sept. 5 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Jessop/Mohr: Victoria Jessop, Waterloo, Ont., and Steven Mohr, Elmira, Ont., July 10 at Highland Baptist Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Klassen/Schumm: John Klassen, Kitchener, Ont., and Pauline Schumm, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 4 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Mahaney/Short: Jim Mahaney, Toledo, Ohio and Michelle Short, Archbold, Ohio, Aug. 7 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Deaths

Baum, Ruth Schmell, 97, Lansdale, Pa., died Aug. 14. Spouse: William Baum (deceased). Parents: Edward and Mary Shelly Schmell (deceased). Survivors: children Doris Garges, Richard; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.

Birky, Lelah Kauffman, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 31. Spouse: Chauncey Birky (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Priscilla Kaufman Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce Oury, Marston; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Kouts, Ind.

Friesen, George, 65, Freeman, S.D., died July 17 of a heart attack. Spouse: Vivian Miller Friesen. Parents: Isaac and Agnes Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Stan, Marcia Hellevang, Connie, Ivan; seven grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Garber, Beulah Mae Hartzler, 95, Hesston, Kan., died Aug. 26. Spouse: Ray Garber (deceased). Parents: Charles and Lydia Yoder Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children JoAnn Jantz, Larry, Ron; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston, Kan.

Good, LaVerne, 57, Blooming Glen, Pa., died Aug. 3 of cancer. Spouse: Margaret Elizabeth Gahman Good. Parents: Irvin and Mary Esther Hartzler Good (deceased). Other survivors: children Joy Reinford, Melodie, Paul, James, John, Joel; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Harnish, Jacob, 90, Manheim, Pa., died Sept. 4. Spouse: Elta Metzler Harnish (deceased). Survivors: children Jacob, Robert, Dennis, Mary Gerlach, Ruth Hertzler, Joanne Forry; 13 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; Funeral: Sept. 9 at Manheim, Pa.

Hjelmstad, Magnar, 89, Rocky Ford, Colo., died Sept. 8. Spouse: (1st) Margaret Miller Hjelmstad (deceased); (2nd) Doris Rupp Hjelmstad. Parents: John and Mary Hjelmstad (deceased). Other survivors: children Ellenor Brenneman, Don, Dottie Kinsinger; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 11 at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Hofstetter, Dorothy, 77, Dalton, Ohio, died Aug. 16 of heart failure. Spouse: Raymond Hofstetter (deceased). Parents: Christian and Ida Sommer (deceased). Survivors: children Ralph, Ray: seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 19 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Armilda, 77, Mifflintown, Pa., died Sept. 3. Spouse: Alpha Kauffman (deceased). Parents: A. L. and Katie King King (deceased). Survivors: daughter Catherine King; two grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 7 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

King, Archie, 101, West Liberty, Ohio, died Aug. 31. Spouse: Sadie Fern King (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Fannie Detweiler King (deceased). Survivors: children Herbert, Willard, Merle, Forrest Dale, Ruby Paul, Vera McCarty, Valeta Headrick; 18 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Kulp, Pearl Derstine, 87, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 3. Parents: Alvin and Mamie Derstine (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 8 at Souderton, Pa.

Lehman, Leonard, 80, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 3. Spouse: Marie Martin Lehman. Parents: Arthur and Nora Weaver Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Letha; two grandchildren; three great grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 7 at East Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Rosenberger, Ruth Wenger, 87, Sellersville, Pa., died Sept. 1 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Andrew Rosenberger (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Martha Rock Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Dennis, Merrill, Harold, Robert, Philip; 12 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Shorthouse, Ray, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 15, Spouse: Marie Yoder Shorthouse (deceased). Parents: Kennon and Bertha Barre Shorthouse (deceased). Survivors: sons Kennon, Chris. Funeral: Aug. 19 at Goshen.

Zook, Lydia Miller, 94, Sarasota, Fla., died Aug. 18. Spouse: Attrenis Thomas Zook (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Catherine Brenneman Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Zeiset, Virginia Shepherd, Bette Groff, Mary Keene, Robert; 27 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

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- **Norma Mennonite Church,** a small southern New Jersey congregation comprised of families and singles of diverse backgrounds, seeks ***pastor.*** Position open October 1999. Please send resume to Norma Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 313, Norma, NJ 08347. For more information, contact Everett Buckwalter, email EB1322@juno.com

- **Western Mennonite School** has the following openings for fall 1999:

  Assistant boys resident director (youth ministry position): Duties include mentoring, leading Bible studies, coordinating youth activities, discipling and supervising dorm students. This is an excellent opportunity for someone trained or interested in youth ministries. Full-time voluntary service; housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin immediately.

  Maintenance assistant (full-time voluntary service position): Carry out duties as assigned by head of maintenance to include maintenance and repair of buildings and grounds; vehicular maintenance skills preferred. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. Begin Nov. 1.

  Contact Darrel White, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church: *40th anniversary celebration,*** Oct. 2-3, 1999. Solo concert by Tony Brown; speakers: Beryl Jantzi, Truman Brunk. For information email akronmench@aol.com

- **First Mennonite Church,** Berne, Ind., seeks a ***director of Christian education.*** The position will be full-time. Send resume by Nov. 15, 1999. To inquire further for job description, contact First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108.

- **International Guest House,** Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for a couple and an individual for a ***one-year voluntary service assignment.*** For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks a nearly retired Mennonite ***administrator*** who could work for two to three years as a semi-volunteer to oversee all school business management activities.

  For more information, please contact Polly Ann Brown, personnel committee chair, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118; 215-753-9295; email parfait@voicenet.com

- **Warwick River Christian School,** a growing Mennonite-sponsored school with 260 students from K3-G5, is seeking a ***principal*** to replace present administrator-principal who retires next summer. Also seeking one or two people for new positions of ***administrator*** and ***director of development.*** A vision for Christ-centered education and relevant experience in education, administration and/or development is required.

  Contact Gordon Zook, 250 Lucas Creek Road, Newport News, VA 23602; 757-874-4713; email GorZook@juno.com

- **Enjoy living and serving in Oregon!** The Mennonite Home of Albany seeks applications for the position of ***executive director*** for this 500-resident accredited retirement community. The person selected will be in harmony with the Mennonite faith and life. He or she will have had successful experience in management in a retirement community and possess strong communication and human relations skills. A master's degree in health care or business administration or equivalent education will be helpful.

  Send resume or inquiry to Gene Kanagy, chair, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-924-9722 or 541-928-5541 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

- **Director** for small, rural ***daycare*** at Mennonite Church of La Jara, Colo. Fill by Jan. 3, 2000. Contact Ruby Nissley, 719-274-5803; email jewel@fone.net

- **Mennonite Board of Missions** seeks candidates for ***host and hostess*** at the London Mennonite Centre. Assignment includes building maintenance, meal preparation, hosting guests, oversight of facility and general support. Candidates will be Christians committed to the mission and style of the London Mennonite Centre who are good team players and enjoy offering hospitality. These are volunteer positions that include a small monthly stipend from LMC. Length of Mission Associate term is three years; projected starting date is March 15, 2000.

  Contact David Paulovich at Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email Davebp@MBM.org

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking ***representatives*** for Mennonite Foundation in both the eastern region (Harleysville, Pa.) and the central region (Illinois and Iowa). The Foundation provides planned giving support to an established donor constituency and charitable institutions. Qualifications for the position include the ability to understand and communicate financial and estate planning concepts, good presentation skills, willingness to obtain securities licensure and earn CFP or other professional designations, and a willingness to travel 25-30 percent. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest along with resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center,** a Christian urban day school K-8, seeks ***principal*** for the 2000-2001 school year with commitment to the vision of providing quality Christian education with an Anabaptist emphasis in the ethnic and economic diversity of the city. Responsibilities include general administration, business management, educational supervision, supervision of overall maintenance and assistance in fund development. Administrator supervises staff of 12-16, coordinates volunteer services and reports to board of directors. Desirable qualifications: teaching and administrative experience, master's degree in education or related field and active membership in Mennonite or other Anabaptist church.

  Send letter of application and current resume to Search Committee, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For further information, call Leanne Schertz, board president, 309-383-2451.

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by Rich Preheim

Time for a birthday portrait

National Catholic Reporter thinks folks are missing the point about the impending new year. It's not about looming computer crashes or partying like it's 1999 but about remembering the Christ child's arrival 2,000 years ago. So the publication has launched an international visual art competition to find an image of Jesus for the new millennium (whenever it starts).

"Can it be that the spirit of the age excludes messiahs and savior?" writes editor Michael J. Farrell. "Or that the mainline churches, wrestling with their various demons, have smothered the founder? Perhaps that is why our world fails to link the millennium to the person of Jesus Christ.

"Or perhaps it's the moment for some artist to transcend these times and say, in whatever medium: Look! This is the one you have been waiting for."

The deadline for entries is Oct. 18, and the contest's results will be announced in *National Catholic Reporter*'s Dec. 24 issue. The winner will receive $2,000. Three additional prizes of $200 will also be awarded. The final judge will be Sister Wendy, the British "art nun" famous for her books and TV series on BBC and PBS.

New life for Easter?

If next year should be a landmark commemoration of the birth of Christ, then the year following offers great potential for observing his death and resurrection. In 2001, Easter will fall on April 15 for both Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholic and Protestant Christians. The World Council of Churches is encouraging ways to mark the common celebration of Easter in 2001, reports *Ecumenical Courier.*

Western Christians and Eastern Orthodox usually celebrate Easter at different times because they use different calendars: Gregorian by the West and Julian by the Orthodox. The two calendars currently differ by 13 days.

A 1997 consultation sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the Middle East Council of Churches was called to search for a common date for Easter following 2001. The consultation has recommended that Easter fall on the Sunday following the first full moon of the spring equinox.

Y2K watch: One more thing to do

John Burton, pastor at Irving (Texas) North Christian Church, is not pushing the Y2K panic button. He isn't stocking freeze-dried food and high-powered rifles and preparing to move to the middle of nowhere. Instead, Burton intends to stay right where he is and do what he can should civiliation go bonkers come Jan. 1, 2000. But for those who are preparing for anticipated chaos, he suggests one more provision:

"Be sure to send in your January and February offerings, in cash or gold, before Dec. 31," Burton writes in *The Joyful Noiseletter.*

Sing it loud, sing it strong

As a denomination, the Brethren in Christ seem to be sitting on the fence of hymnody. Congregations were recently polled to find out what type of music they used in their worship services. *Evangelical Visitor* reports the survey finding that 11.3 percent use only hymns compared to 3.3 percent who said they use only choruses or praise songs. But most congregations combined both: 43.3 percent said they sing "mostly traditional hymns but with several contemporary praise songs added," while 43.2 percent reported using "mostly contemporary praise songs but with several hymns added."

The speed of bureaucracy

It took a long time, but believers in one Chinese community have shown that you can fight city hall, according to Amity News Service. In 1959, church property in Qi Township on .09 "mu" (about .015 acre) was confiscated for the township's Grain and Oil Bureau. The land was given to a state-owned tool factory in 1971. After the Cultural Revolution, local Christians repeatedly called for the return of the church property. The case was finally investigated last year, and 1.1 mu (about .017 acre) was awarded for the township church.

Of fruitfulness and multiplication

The International Conference on Population and Development reports that a majority of women in some developing countries with large Catholic populations have used contraceptive methods forbidden by the Vatican: 70 percent in Brazil, 64 percent in Botswana and in Trinidad/Tobago, and 61 percent in Indonesia.

Tidbits

- An Iowa-based prayer network has 6,000 volunteers praying for 60,000 Iowa and Wisconsin farmers during planting and harvesting seasons.—*Successful Farming*
- Only 5 percent of all Native Americans are actively involved in a church.—*The Lighthouse*
- Publishers of church periodicals tend to have better employee benefits, such as health insurance and leave time, than secular publishers.—*Newslog*
- More than 5 million copies of *Veggie Tales* videos have been sold to date.—*Wireless Age*
- Methodist Church founder John Wesley traveled an average of 5,000 miles a year for 40 years.—*The Wesleyan Advocate*

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Rich Preheim

When Amy meets Peter

It's a true story, a Vietnam War account of John 15:13, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." A soldier gives up his life to try to aid a fatally wounded buddy on the battlefield.

Stories extolling sacrificial friendship are important, to be sure. Yet for those Christians who read through the lens of a nonviolent God, this particular story also glorifies the idolatry of American patriotism.

Not that it prevented "I'll Never Forget You, Young Soldier" from receiving fifth place in last year's Amy Foundation Writing Awards, a contest designed to encourage "writers to communicate biblical truth to a secular audience."

As the story reads, those biblical truths apparently include the "commitment to a fellow American" while, at the same time, participating in campaigns to kill people who aren't under the Stars and Stripes. Friendship is narrowly defined by the right uniform, and belief in God's love for all creation gets demoted. If national allegiances don't supercede Christian discipleship, the two are at least synonymous. By giving the story fifth place and $2,000, the Amy Awards, named after the daughter of founder W. James Russell, endorse that concept.

Amy is certainly not the first to do this. Jerry Falwell, James Kennedy, Robert Schuller and others like her lead us into the easy, simple bliss of power and success. When love of God equals love of nation, we can store up treasures on earth and in heaven. But with all the comfort and security come underlying injustices. Like the demands to kill people. God provides remedies to those injustices. But those remedies may require us to undergo trials, persecution and suffering. And then we realize that we must choose primary loyalty to either God or country. We can't serve two masters.

> **With all the comfort and security come underlying injustices. Like the demands to kill people.**

Living out our faith should set us apart from the ways of the world. The apostle Peter points out we are to be strangers in the world, aliens modeling the ways of the higher realm to which we belong. "Conduct yourself honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they may malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge" (1 Peter 2:12).

1 Peter, with its theme of strangers and aliens, provides the scriptural basis for "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church," the congregational study designed as part of the process of transforming the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada into the new Mennonite Church. The study focuses on the church and its mission in this world. And it's a subject needing renewed attention.

Not everything about our faith and our culture is in tension. But maybe it was easier to identify those distinctives in years past. That was certainly the case with the peace position, which historically has defined us culturally. The military draft forced us to take a public stand for faithfulness to our Christian beliefs—a stand that drew ridicule and torment.

But now without a draft, we no longer have to declare our pacifism. We can be lulled into complacency by our security, knowing that we don't have to prepare ourselves for being slapped with yellow paint by an angry mob, going off into alternative service or even being sentenced to prison. It becomes much easier to consider ourselves as full citizens of our nation rather than strangers and aliens. Thus, as Amy shows us, we risk buying into the fallacy of equating God and country.

Militarism is not the only issue facing citizens of God's realm. There are concerns about economics, the environment, racism, sexism —all concerns about the ways we accept societal norms. Where do we shop? What athletic shoes do we buy? What vehicles do we drive? What movies do we watch? How do we prepare for retirement? How do we relate to people who are different from us? All these are questions of justice, which the Lord calls us to pursue. But they are especially problematic because we fail to recognize the detrimental results of our actions due to our acculturation.

One publication recently identified a woman living in New York as "a former native of Kosovo." In its column on language use, *Columbia Journalism Review* notes that while the woman can be a former resident, she can't be a former native—"unless she was literally born again."

As Scripture repeatedly tells us, that is exactly the point. New birth creates new allegiances to a new nation above earthly ones.—*rp*

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Membership rolls on

I fear that the integration of our two church bodies is headed for trouble—big time. It is almost a foregone conclusion that congregations that have homosexuals as members will be forced out. Next would be those that have friends of homosexuals. Probably congregations with active military members would have to go, then those with inactive military, followed by those with friends of military folks. Law enforcement could be next (they carry weapons); judges and prosecutors would have to go (death penalty). Soon we would have a "pure church," religious cleansing at its best.

For the first time in my 59-year membership in the General Conference Mennonite Church, I am afraid. Afraid that my congregation will be forced to remove me from the membership rolls or be barred from the larger body. My 56 years of military service include four years of World War II service, 18 years of reserve service and 34 years as a mobilization designee with hip-pocket orders from the Pentagon. I remain subject to recall until my death. Our Sunday worship services begin with or include the words, "All are welcome here." I am afraid those words may become meaningless. *—Ronald V. Woelk, Hutchinson, Kan.*

Although I can understand the suspicion of many of those who voted against it, I think it was entirely appropriate for Harold Miller to have offered in St. Louis his motion reaffirming past statements regarding human sexuality. I say that as someone who supports noncelibate gay and lesbian Christians being welcome in our congregations as fully recognized members.

Miller's motion seems to me to have been an attempt to separate the issue of membership boundaries from the issue of homosexuality. The very week of the delegate sessions, Miller went on the record as being open to congregations having noncelibate gay and lesbian members as long as the congregations involved continued to affirm that sex outside of heterosexual marriage is sin (Readers Say, July 27). His motion seems to have been an attempt to show the rest of us that it is possible to welcome noncelibate gay and lesbian Christians into membership without that being an endorsement of sex outside of heterosexual marriage.

In my opinion, the way Miller has pointed us is our best hope, for unless we separate membership boundaries from whether one is guilty of sin, we will as congregations continue to commit the mortal sin of pharisaism by implicitly ascribing to ourselves a purity that does not accord with reality.—*John Zimmerman, Rocky Ford, Colo.*

In his editorial ("Out of Focus: The Spirit of St. Louis," Sept. 7), Rich Preheim pointed out the problems of polity, authority and sin and their complex interrelations within Mennonite Church USA. To be sure, issues of membership and homosexuality require additional discussion, especially in view that, according to J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger's *The Mennonite Mosaic*, roughly half of Mennonites state they don't want even celibate gays to be members of their church. I hope the statistic is incorrect.

Still, whatever the percentage, I hope also that the new denominational leadership addresses this "closet" problem. One wonders what Ezekiel would say to us in view of his remarks about Sodom (Ezekiel 16:48-49)? One wonders, too, how many Mennonite homes have mistreated their teenagers because they have the "wrong" sexual orientation.—*Carl S. Keener, State College, Pa.*

Incomplete Christology

J. Denny Weaver's articles ("The Theology of Jesus Christ in the Margins," Aug. 31, and "The Reign of God Made Visible in Jesus," Sept. 7), in faulting the theology of Christ's substitutionary atonement and relegating it to an outdated image, misplaces the blame.

Rather than the doctrine of substitution itself being the source of the injustice Weaver observes, perhaps it is our tendency to create God in our own image, then promote selectively incomplete theologies to hide the hardness of our hearts and further our own agenda. This was the problem of the white slave owners that Weaver cites as justifying their racism: Their Christology was incomplete, leaving out the teaching and example of Jesus' life while preaching only his atoning death. But to remove the centrality of our Savior's vicarious death on the cross, satisfying God's righteousness (Romans 3:22-26) in favor of a "new image," leaves us with a new version of the original problem: an incomplete Christology.

We must not reduce Jesus' shed blood to a merely symbolic and illustrative image, suggesting that we are not, in fact, in need of his atoning sacrifice. A full receiving of God's costly grace should release us to walk in redeemed gratitude, following in his footsteps the path of justice, mercy and humility. *—Randy Good, Woodstock, Vt.*

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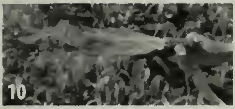

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readers say

An unnatural act

I have not been enthused about the General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church integration. Perhaps disinterested best describes my attitude. Thus I have been looking forward to the series of articles exploring reasons for integrating (Sept. 7, 14, 21 and 28), hoping they would justify the anguish we are going through. The articles discussing the historical and sociological perspectives on integration (Sept. 7 and 14) have provided a compelling case for dropping the whole process.

One of the themes running through both articles has been the many instances of individuals, churches, regions or conferences working together to meet needs or have relationships which they deem worthwhile. At least as presented in the articles, these have all been virtually initiated voluntarily by various parties. It seems worthy efforts have been and continue to be accomplished without the need to coerce individuals, groups and conferences to merge. It is tempting to conclude that the push to integrate arises out of impatience with God and a failure to trust the many wonderful ways in which small voluntary integrations have occurred over several hundred years. The process implies a belief that only by merging can we push God to do the job the way it ought to be done. I am inclined to think that if integration is meant to happen naturally, it will happen—the integration process now going on is an unnatural act. From a faith perspective, the current process sounds like top-down corporate bull.—*Tom Shelly, Bloomington, Minn.*

Condemnation?

Jesus did not come to condemn the world, so why should we?—*Elizabeth Unruh, Hillsboro, Kan.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Five struggles about faith and money

by Mark Vincent

We find freedom when we surrender. We find grace when we admit need. We find wisdom when we admit our foolishness. We find a family when we admit we are alienated. We find a source of strength when we admit our weakness.

In an attempt to articulate more clearly Christian beliefs about money, The Giving Project conducted 12 focus groups within congregations across Canada and the United States. We also met with many church people in seminar settings and asked more than 60 people to critique what we put together. The results of this intensive study are produced in the book *A Christian View of Money: Celebrating God's Generosity* (Herald Press, 1999).

These beliefs about money may be expressed this way:

- Money is godlike in its power, powerful enough to communicate our values.
- Christian people share God's values.
- God's values are expressed in the biblical promises of redemption and abundant life.
- God works to make redemption and abundant life possible through Jesus Christ.
- Meeting Jesus Christ as he is portrayed in Scripture brings profound conversion.
- Profound conversion results in firstfruits living.
- Our Christian brothers and sisters are a family to help us live faithfully with the power of money.

We find little disagreement with these beliefs but a lot of complication in living them. We say them but are not always conscious of what our actions communicate. We sing them, read them in Scripture and hear them preached but often do so without understanding the implications.

As we in the Giving Project worked to better express these beliefs, we noted five recurring struggles working against our ability to develop a generous character in our church members. It did not seem to matter where we traveled. The issues frequently found a voice. They are worth noting.

1. When talking about God's values, we often choose language that reflects personal and intimate experience. Not everyone's conversion experience is the same. God doesn't use a cookie cutter to bring us into the kingdom. God's methods are as creative and diverse as creation itself. Our conversion follows someone introducing us to the Christian way. The language used in making the introduction often becomes the language we choose to express and reinforce our faith. Those words are looked to for reassurance and hope. When they are not heard, a lack of trust often springs up.

For instance, my grandparents, who carved out a northern Indiana farm during the Depression, used phrases like "Beulah Land," "crossing over Jordan" or "marching to Zion." My parents came of age during the height of Billy Graham's ministry, so a phrase like "getting saved" or "being born again" holds special meaning for them. Those nurtured toward faith in the '60s and '70s have a special affection for talking about "God's shalom," "koinonia" or "community." I began ministry in an urban setting and developed an affection for Scripture passages about the New Jerusalem. And it is likely that the preferred language for describing the values of God will shift again. Our increasingly ambiguous and androgynous culture may find new life in talking about the gospel as a "mystery" or "paradox."

All these words and phrases are scriptural, and we enrich ourselves by claiming them all instead of focusing only on the familiar. Christians need to be expansive and embrace the richness of biblical words and symbols that describe God's work.

2. Conversion in North America is not always profound. Two forces work against profundity. One is external, the other rests inside us.

The external force is our culture, which treats Christian faith as irrelevant. We hear it said, "So what if you want to follow Jesus. Just don't let it interfere with your work."

The problem with creating a separation between one's moral character and one's ability to perform is that in that moment we separate grace as well. Grace is not something you count or measure. Grace is not a performance objective; grace is part of one's moral fabric. Without grace operating in our culture, there will be no place for us once sales, leadership, cooking, research, writing or any other special ability fades. If we strip moral character from our jobs, then not only is there no more sin, there is also no more mercy.

When one's religious convictions are considered irrelevant, it is harder to be profoundly converted than when faith is persecuted. If hostility reigns, the choice of allegiance becomes clear. Where faith is irrelevant, confusion and attempts to live with multiple loyalties occur. The call to profound conversion is the call to penetrating Christian faith.

Our internal resistance is apprehension at giving up control. We say too flippantly that God owns everything, and we say it too often in the context of raising money for some ministry project. But when we discover that this means God owns me, we are not so quick to believe it.

We raise objections that this works against our ability to be self-actualized or be all that we can be. It works against our culture's love of individualism. Some of us even say that God owning us refers to slavery, so we had better think in new categories.

Slavery was and is a horrible institution. Continuing problems with racism and prejudice are a cancer in our society. We can celebrate some progress, however, that after centuries of debate and human suffering, it has finally become a dominant value that people should not own each other. Jews and Christians have been as instrumental as any other group to abolish slavery and reduce prejudice. Why? Because we believe we belong to God, that we are God's special creations, that there is dignity and a set of freedoms that all humans are to enjoy.

We belong to something or someone. Understanding this helps us rush to God with all our life. And God awaits us with open arms.

3. We struggle with the idea that the church is our first family. We are willing to say the church is important, even to say that the church is the place for some level of accountability. Yet Jesus' teaching—that if forced to choose between our family of faith and our natural family we choose our family of faith—is difficult for us to accept.

When this subject comes up, we tend to respond as if Jesus asks us to abdicate our family responsibilities. One man said, "I don't care what you say, my wife and children come before the church."

His objection misses the point. We don't have to split our time and responsibility between church and biological family. Those of us whose spouses or children are not walking in the faith know we have a mission field in our own homes. It is where our work of evangelism takes place. The church family becomes a reference point to help us be a compelling witness to our family, not a harsh or nagging one. Those whose spouses and children willingly join us in professing faith in Jesus and in church attendance can discover this to be important family time. In either case, the church is the touchstone that helps us raise our families.

We also must note how elitist it is to assume we can hold multiple loyalties. For much of the Christian world the congregation is where people go for healing, for economic resources, for social interaction, for a fleeting and furtive act of worship before they are caught, for a word from God, for life itself. It is their only beacon of hope, while we give it leftovers.

4. We think there is a choice between wisdom in the use of money and freedom from money's power, and we prefer wisdom. To choose one over the other is to choose certain bondage. A life-giving perspective on money requires wisdom and freedom, or else money will take God's rightful place.

Marilyn Noll

A recent experience with a Pittsburgh taxi driver taught me something about the balance. On a bright October Friday I was feeling especially cheery. As we got under way, I asked him whether he had Saturday off. He grunted and said no. Further, he had only three days off the past five years. I said this must mean he either loved his work or really needed the money. He proceeded to tell me he blew $1,000 each week on the slot machines and had blown $500 the night before.

Once I got over my shock I realized I had never had this open a conversation about money with a Christian brother or sister. I also noted that in spite of this man's need for wisdom, he possessed a freedom I desperately need—not a freedom to blow money for a selfish end but a freedom not to cover up what I am doing, a freedom to state my actions. If money truly follows my values, there is no need to hide anything.

5. We tend to think we must choose between financial independence and financial dependence, and we prefer independence.

We believe people should make their own way in life and not mooch off others. Yes, we are troubled by those who achieve financial strength and keep on going, but if push comes to shove we think independence is far better than being dependent on someone. If we did not, we wouldn't have so many people spending money they can ill afford on lottery tickets, and we wouldn't have so many millionaires upset that their portfolio did not receive a 20 percent return. We believe financial independence is the lesser of two evils. In fact, we may see no problem with it at all.

But the Bible tells us both to bear each other's burdens and to carry our own loads. It invites us to stop choosing between independence and dependence and pursue interdependence. We must become more comfortable with this paradox. We must admit our need, even while seeking to gather strength. We must be open to receive, even while we give.

This is the way of Christian faith. We find freedom when we surrender. We find grace when we admit need. We find wisdom when we admit our foolishness. We find a family when we admit we are alienated. We find a source of strength when we admit our weakness.

I had never had this open a conversation about money with a Christian brother or sister. In spite of this man's need for wisdom, he possessed a freedom I desperately need—a freedom to state my actions. If money truly follows my values, there is no need to hide anything.

Mark Vincent is director of The Giving Project and works for Mennonite Mutual Aid in Goshen, Ind.

Common ground

or, the Mennonite Game

by Ervin Beck

On our second day at Dorothy's bed and breakfast in Royal Tunbridge Wells, she invited us to afternoon tea at the home of her next-door neighbor, an Episcopal priest from New England who had recently retired to England.

When we were introduced to Newton and said we were from Goshen, Ind., he pointed out that there is a Goshen in Connecticut, too. "Yes," I said, "where Madeleine L'Engle lives, right?"

"Yes," he said, "she is a friend of mine and I had lunch with her in her home just last month."

To which I replied, "Well, Madeleine is a friend of mine, too, and I have had lunch with her at Goshen College."

Thus began a relaxed, temporary friendship—a communal feeling—with erstwhile complete strangers in a strange place.

To keep that community alive and dynamic, each member, new or old, needs to be creative and aggressive—and sensitive—in playing the Mennonite Game.

The point is not that it was a happy coincidence, although it was, but that we so quickly found a personal connection—a common ground—that identified each to the other and served as a context for further acquaintance.

I thought of that event and many similar others last year as my wife and I made our way in a place where we had never before lived and where we arrived knowing no one at all, at the University of Warwick near Coventry, England. How should we, as complete strangers, go about making friends and fitting into a community? That personal, practical question was sharpened for us as we read *The Mennonite* from afar and noted a discussion there of the "Mennonite Game" and its sometimes pejorative connotations for members of the Mennonite community. Perhaps our experiences and ideas will help redeem the meaning and use of that folk custom.

As our Tunbridge Wells tea suggests, some such attempt at personal connectedness seems crucial in making the initial acquaintance of any stranger. If it's not the Mennonite Game, then it's the Episcopal Game (L'Engle is an Episcopalian) or even the universal Get Acquainted Game.

The latter was certainly the case when we showed up for a supper party where we knew few people and which we knew would be attended by some movers and shakers in English culture.

A bit nervous and intimidated, we rang the bell, then gave our hostess an obviously American hospitality gift, as a self-introduction. She graciously reciprocated by saying that her first husband was an American, that her daughter had graduated from Harvard and was now making films for Discovery channel in Boston, and that she really missed the Constant Comment tea she had enjoyed in the States. Charmed and disarmed, we joined the others at the buffet.

I struck up a lasting friendship with Jack Mapange, a poet from Malawi, by saying I had visited his country and, in fact, had bought two masks used by traditional dance groups from his own tribe, the Yaos.

Later, after fumbling a bit in conversation with a potter from Leeds, we became temporary friends when I told him that in Coxwold, Yorkshire, we had once bought pottery from Peter Dick, whose work he knew.

Constant Comment tea, Yao masks, pottery by Peter Dick—on such modest pillars were the friendships of the evening constructed.

Amish: We even used a version of the true Mennonite Game to establish community here in England, where Mennonites are virtually unknown. In the first conversation with my university mentor, David, a prominent English poet and novelist, he said, "The only other Mennonite I know is Rudy Wiebe. Do you know him?" Of course, I said. I claim Rudy as a friend and had recently completed a long essay on one of Rudy's novels. David had also seen the movie *Witness* and asked the old question of how Mennonites are related to the Amish, which I was happy to answer.

We attended a Friends meeting in Coventry, not because we prefered silent meeting but because we could fit quickly into that community, thanks to the many assumptions Quakers and Mennonites share. A version of the Mennonite Game served us well there, too.

On the first Sunday, when we introduced ourselves at the end of the meeting, we said we were Mennonites from Indiana.

Soon Frank, an older member of the meeting, introduced himself, saying that as a conscientious objector ("conshie") during World War II, he was put in charge of a hostel near Oxford for troubled schoolboys who were separated from their parents.

"Each of those boys received a quilt labeled 'From the Mennonite Church,'" he said. "Oh, how they loved those quilts!" His voice was choked and tears came to his eyes as he remembered.

Then Jeff asked if we knew a Mennonite from New York named Alwine, who had recently returned to the States after helping Jeff for 18 months as a volunteer at the Emmaus community for homeless people that Jeff manages in Coventry.

No, we did not know Alwine. Nor did we know who made the quilts that Frank cherished. But both Friends associated us with those gifts we had not given. And our friendships with them grew over the succeeding weeks.

In none of these instances did we feel that the questions or the offerings of self were intended to exclude us from fellowship. The opposite was true. What we said and asked, and what the strangers said and asked, were intended to establish connections that could serve as common ground for further acquaintance, friendship and community.

Short acquaintance: Those who did not approach us at all, or those who offered no interesting information about themselves, or those who asked us no questions—those were the people who apparently were not interested in including us in their lives. Or at least not yet. We learned not to judge others' motives on short acquaintance.

I recall one reference to the Mennonite Game back home that stands as a paradigm for me in its use and misuse.

A Mennonite friend of mine—from a different country—once opened a public meeting by making negative references to what he called "the Mennonite Game." He had in mind instances when he felt rejected by Mennonites for his not having the genealogical and cultural credentials they seemed to require of him.

But then, unself-consciously, he introduced himself to the group by citing the country, city and mission school in which he had grown up, and by naming and praising one by one the Mennonite missionaries who had served his community so well. We recognized those people and thereby understood my friend, the speaker, quickly and well.

Photos by Jon Warren—for illustration only

Probably every Mennonite plays the Mennonite Game in some way, at some time, to some extent and for the same reason—to identify each person in conversation in order to further build and strengthen community.

We are fortunate the Mennonite church deliberately offers its members the ideal and the reality, in earthen vessels, of a close-knit community. We can thereby be saved from the alienation, loneliness and depression experienced by so many people today.

To keep that community alive and dynamic, each member, new or old, needs to be creative and aggressive—and sensitive—in playing the Mennonite Game.

Three of the unspoken rules of the game are these: (1) Ask the kinds of questions that will create connection rather than alienation. (2) Assume that your conversational partner is well-intentioned; attribute any offense to social ineptness. (3) If all else fails, keep talking, even if only about ordinary things like Constant Comment tea.

Ervin Beck, who teaches English at Goshen (Ind.) College, was on sabbatical last school year at the University of Warwick near Coventry, England.

Difficult trips, new journey for board

Members pick Nashville, Tenn., as next convention site

CHEVY CHASE, Md.—The new Mennonite Church USA Executive Board surely hopes it is easier to get to Nashville, Tenn., than it was to get to Chevy Chase.

Hurricane Floyd disrupted travel plans for the board's first meeting, Sept. 17-18, held at the National 4-H Center, delaying and rerouting many board and staff members. But once together, the 18 of the 20 board members who could attend started to tackle the agenda of an integrated U.S. church body.

Much of the meeting was spent discussing the membership question and how to handle issues needing attention before the next scheduled convention in 2001. In one of its few official actions, the board approved holding the convention in conjunction with the youth convention July 2-7, 2001, in Nashville. Youth planners had already selected the site.

Board members expressed concern about budget, planning and lodging costs. But board secretary Duane Oswald said the board needs to tell people that "we are aware of these concerns, but for the time being, this is the direction we are going."

A resolution from the board executive committee and approved by the board noted that issues of youth and adult convention planning need to be part of long-range planning. But because of "board priorities and limited discussion time," it was necessary to act based on the previous models of joint conventions.

Although no decisions were made, the membership issue commanded much attention. "One of the greatest gifts we can give the church in the next two years is to see to it that the membership question is resolved," said Lee Delp. "I think we don't need to solve it here, but we need to see how it can be solved."

One of the greatest gifts we can give the church in the next two years is to see to it that the membership question is resolved.

—Lee Delp

The issue is expected to be a major one for the Constituency Leaders Council, which was scheduled to hold its first meeting Oct. 1-2 near Kansas City, Kan. "Highly emotional reports came out of St. Louis, and we need to attend to those feelings [at the CLC] before we move to a proposal," said moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, who will lead the CLC.

The board also grappled with how to balance its twofold task of overseeing continuing church work while also reviewing the many, intertwined proposals for transforming current programs and structures into Mennonite Church USA between now and 2001.

GCMC photo by Dave Linscheid

Mennonite Church USA Executive Board member and executive committee member Roy Williams makes a point during the board's first meeting, Sept. 17-18 in Chevy Chase, Md. Next to Williams are Norma Wiens and Cleon Claassen.

"Nurturing existing programs is an important task, and we have to step up to the plate 100 percent," Delp said. "But we have to step up to [the transformation] plate 100 percent, too."

To keep from swamping the Executive Board with transformation-related business, the board's executive committee will review all proposals before deciding which ones to send to the board. Members will also be kept apprised of developments through monthly communication with the Transformation Team, which is directing the transformation process.

Hurricane Floyd threw off the meeting's schedule as many participants were late in arriving, some by as much as a day. A group from Newton, Kan., was originally scheduled to fly into Baltimore. Substitute flights to Washington and Harrisburg, Pa., were also canceled. The group eventually landed in Pittsburgh and rented a car to drive five hours to Chevy Chase. The pounding rain caused mechanical problems to the car of board member Harold Miller. As a result, it took him nine hours—three hours longer than expected—to drive from his home in Corning, N.Y, to Chevy Chase.—*GCMC News Service*

Drought response having a hay day

AKRON, Pa.—Farmers in Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa and Ontario have overwhelmingly responded to a Mennonite Disaster Service drive to provide hay to farmers in the Eastern United States whose crops were decimated by this summer's severe drought.

As of mid-September, 64 truckloads of hay have been sent to Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. And loads, coordinated by local organizers, are still going out weekly.

"We know all about disasters, and we want to be servants for the Lord," says farmer Hank Balder of Hamilton, Mich., who drove one of 15 tractor-trailers from Hamilton County Sept. 10-11. "The farmers around our area have the best hay they've had in years. We have more than enough, and we're happy to help."

To start their hay-delivery blitz to the East, the Hamilton truckers had a 30-mile police escort through the county. Balder helped deliver 22 tons of hay to the Nolt farm near Fredricksburg, Pa., to feed the Nolts' livestock through the winter.

"We only got our first cutting of hay," says Paul Nolt. "There was no second or third cutting. There was just nothing there. We are using our winter supply right now."

What began in August with a few phone calls from farmers has developed into a major operation now including Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Church of the Brethren and Church World Service. MDS is coordinating the response, while local MDS workers are keeping the hay moving.

"The grass-roots nature of MDS is what is making this response effective," says MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker. "Many of our coordinators and contact people are farmers and can identify the supply and need a lot better than we can here in the MDS office. We help to make the connections, and they're the ones pursuing those connections to make sure the need gets met. This is the MDS network at its best."

Despite being doused by Hurricane Floyd last month, the lack of rain during the critical summer growing months will be felt through winter. MDS expects to continue the reponse into the winter months.—*Marisa Doncevic for MCC News Service*

MDS anticipating Floyd flood projects

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) expects to set up projects in at least two locations affected by flooding caused by Hurricane Floyd's torrential rains last month.

MDS officials have already toured southeastern Virginia and northern North Carolina to assess damage and possible responses. Visits are also planned for other sites in those two states and in South Carolina. Assessment is expected to take several more weeks.

"We keep hearing about more and more communities that have been severely flooded and need help," says MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker.

In New Jersey, local Pennsylvania units are cleaning up in the town of Bound Brook, where flood waters reached the ceiling of the fire station.
—*Marisa Doncevic*

Great Lakes conferences discuss merger models

Bigger is better, believes the committee charged with bringing a proposal to integrate the Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences of the Mennonite Church and the Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

After considering several other proposals, the 18-member committee has stated its preference for one geographically large conference divided into seven or more mission districts. The committee is suggesting each district have a church-planting committee and a witness committee, which would include evangelism, peace, justice and service. The districts would also share stome staffing, such as youth pastors.

Delegates of all four conferences last year approved pursuing regional integration. The committee will bring a proposed model to the first joint meeting of the four conferences, to be held June 22-24, 2000, at Goshen (Ind.) College.

In addition to the preferred model, other options considered by the committee included: reconfiguring the current four conferences into seven or more in a federation with possible shared programs and staffing; remaining four conferences with cooperation welcomed but not required; two or three of the conferences integrating when ready; or forming a fifth conference which congregations would have the option of joining.

EMU homecoming rings a bell

A youngster inspects the "unity bell" during Eastern Mennonite University's (EMU) 1969 fund drive for a new library. The bell was rung every time $1,000 was raised.

That effort, now hailed as a "miracle drive," provides the theme of "The Bell's Ringing, Come Home" for the Harrisonburg, Va., school's homecoming festivities Oct. 8-10.

During Dec. 6-9, 1969, EMU students worked feverishly to raise funds for a much-needed new library. A goal of $20,000 was set, and students performed jobs in the community, solicited funds and held an auction. In the end, they raised more than $111,000.

Hartzler Library was completed in 1971, and the bell hangs adjacent to it.

Clarification: J. Lorne Peachey cited three reasons for concluding his tenure as editor of *The Mennonite,* as reported in the Sept. 28 issue. Those reasons were not given by the Interim Periodical Board, although they were released through the board.

MCC photo by Linda Shelly

A poem lovely as a . . .

Forestry engineer Rosario de Canales tends seedlings in a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored reforestation project at Choluteca, Honduras. The project's goal is to plant 30,000 trees. Deforestation had been a serious problem before Hurricane Mitch hit Central America in November 1998. "It became obvious that deforestation exaggerated the hurricane's devastation," de Canales says.

MCC, Rosedale join for Turkey quake relief work

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Rosedale Mennonite Missions (RMM) have agreed to contribute $250,000 for Turkey earthquake relief efforts.

MCC and RMM will work closely with local partners in Turkey to provide winterized tents, elevated tent bases, school supplies and more. The quake, which shattered Turkey in mid-August, left more than 17,000 people dead and many more homeless. Tent cities have been set up on the outskirts of the main cities hit by the earthquake. An MCC and RMM assessment team visited Turkey Sept. 13-17.

Winterized tents come with several layers of material and can accommodate an interior stove. Tent bases will be needed to elevate the tents from the ground, since the rainy season will soon turn the tent cities into fields of mud.

The assessment team found no need for shipments of food or other items at this time.

RMM, the mission agency of the Conservative Mennonite Conference, has program in Turkey. Merle and Mary Hochstedler, RMM workers in Istanbul, have agreed to coordinate RMM and MCC's joint earthquake response for the coming months.—*MCC News Service*

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Canadian conference grants special status to woman pastor

STEINBACH, Man.—Canada's Evangelical Mennonite Conference has approved an "exceptional circumstance" to allow a woman to officiate weddings. But EMC delegates at this year's annual meeting also agreed to lay aside for five years the contentious issue of women in church leadership.

Ardith Frey in 1992 became the first woman EMC pastor when she was called to Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. The congregation has requested several times that Frey be licensed to conduct weddings. All requests until now had been denied. Five Winnipeg congregations last year voiced support for Aberdeen's request.—*The Messenger*

Indonesians pursing peacemaking possibilities

SEMARANG, Indonesia—A group with representatives from the three Indonesian Mennonite synods is exploring ways its churches can do conflict transformation education and training in family, church and school settings.

The group's work grew out of this summer's joint peace conference of the three synods: GKMI, GITJ and JKI. It was the second such conference and drew 45 pastors, seminary students and community workers.

Participants felt that developing common understandings of a relevant Christian peace agenda will be urgent in Indonesia in the coming decade. The ongoing economic and political crisis and cultural dynamics fuel fires of discontent and present opportunities for the church to discover its role in the wider society.—*MCC News Service*

MWC adds staff in France, United States

STRASBOURG, France—Mennonite World Conference (MWC) has added three members to its staff for one year.

Ray and Margie Brubacher, formerly of Akron, Pa., will spend four months in Elkhart, Ind., with Ray serving part-time as special projects director. The Brubachers will then spend eight months in MWC's Strasbourg office, with Ray working full-time and Margie part-time. Ray recently served as Mennonite Central Committee's director for overseas program.

Pakisa Tshimika, Fresno, Calif., will serve half-time as coordinator of MWC's Global Sharing Projects. He is program director for Africa and director for Social Ministries for for MBMS International, the North American Mennonite Brethren mission agency.—*MWC News Service*

Displaced Iraqis get new homes with MCC help

BAGHDAD, Iraq—With the help of North American partners, including Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Iraqi families displaced by war have new residences.

MCC channeled funds from two other agencies, Ministry of Money and Jubilee, to the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) to rehabilitate run-down, abandoned or unfinished buildings where the families live. They had been forced from their homes, farms and villages over the years, settling where they could find shelter.

Using local contractors, MECC provides one renovated room for each family of eight. Each room has a window, an electrical outlet, a light bulb and a ceiling fan. Bathrooms for men and women and a community kitchen are provided on each floor of the renovated buildings.—*MCC News Service*

New conservative group organizes

PLAIN CITY, Ohio—Nine congregations and 43 ministers wanting to take a more conservative approach to lifestyle issues and polity have joined to create a new conference.

The new Biblical Mennonite Alliance, which held its first convention in August in Plain City, includes five congregations that had been part of the Conservative Mennonite Conference; the other four congregations had been unaffiliated. Unlike the Conservative Mennonite Conference, the Biblical Mennonite Alliance mandates that women wear prayer veilings. The new group also wants more congregational accountability.

"It won't be a heavy-handed, bishop-oversight thing," says Walter Beachy, chair of the overseers council. "But we will have frequent meetings with our pastors to discuss faith and practice."—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Goshen College gets science grant

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College has received a $66,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to aid students in physiology. The grant will fund a two-year project titled "Improving the Analytical and Collaborative Skills of Students With Inquiry Activities in Physiology Laboratories." The project will involve 200 students, starting this school year.

by the way ...

In the first case in which any Amish have faced federal drug charges, two Pennsylvania Amish men arrested last year for dealing drugs have each been sentenced to one year in prison and five years probation.—*The Razor Wire*

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Births

Albright, Zachary Allen, Aug. 18, to Allen and Sarah (Diller) Albright, Norwalk, Ohio.

Brenneman, Seth Robert, Sept. 7, to Steve and Victoria (Miller) Brenneman, Goshen, Ind.

Cruz, David Julian, Sept. 11, to Joan (Ortiz) and John Cruz, Blue Bell, Pa.

Good, Stefanie Leann, Sept. 13, to Ronald and Wanda Good, Salunga, Pa.

Harnish, Mary Kaufman, Sept. 7, to Craig and Nina (Kaufman) Harnish, Leola, Pa.

Hladky, Aaron Michael, Sept. 8, to Beth (Brubacher) and Greg Hladky, Cincinnati.

Looser, Jevon Daniel, July 22, to Tom and Tricia (Schwartzentruber) Looser, New Hamburg, Ont.

Mainland, Deanna Grace, Sept. 3, to Brian and Rhonda (Lichty) Mainland, Wellesley, Ont.

Miller, Samantha Lee, Aug. 27, to Nancy (Kramer) and Terry Miller, Middlebury, Ind.

Schrock, Michelle Faye, Aug. 11, to Delmar and Lynda (Miller) Schrock, Arthur, Ill.

Sharpe, Madison Marie, Sept. 11, to Mark and Stephanie (Friesen) Sharpe, Tampa, Fla.

Urich, Carissa Rae, Sept. 1, to David and Tamra (Stotler) Urich, Bailey, Colo.

Walters, Zachary James, July 14, to James and Rebecca (McDonald) Walters, London, Ont.

Wittmer, Amos J., Sept. 8, to Beth (Jantzi) and Merlin Wittmer, Sarasota, Fla.

Wynn, Jarett Frazier, Aug. 27, to Larry and Trina (Schmidt) Wynn, Wichita, Kan.

Zimmerman, Kylee Renae, Sept. 13, to Sharon (Schlabach) and Terry Zimmerman, Shipshewana, Ind.

Marriages

Bauder/Bergen: Jami Bauder, Sutton, Neb., and Andrew John Bergen, Henderson, Neb., Sept. 11 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Braun/Chen: Veronika Braun, Chambersburg, Pa., and Andrew Chen, Lansdale, Pa., Aug. 21 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Brooks/Hundt: Stacy Brooks, Stratford, Ont., and Todd Hundt, Stratford, Aug. 28.

Burnett/Maddox: Jereamy Burnett, Lahoma, Okla., and Rachelle Maddox, Lahoma, Sept. 11 at Grace Mennonite Church, Enid, Okla.

Carr/Dale: Robert Carr, Denver, and Julie Dale, Denver, Aug. 7 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Company/Huser: Joe Company, Bloomington, Ill., and Amy Huser, Berne, Ind., July 18 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Cook/Yoder: Miranda Cook, Goshen, Ind., and Andrew Yoder, Goshen, Sept. 4 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Glick/Helmuth: Amy Glick, Orrville, Ohio, and Patrick Helmuth, Louisville, Ohio, Sept. 4 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Gouldey/Leatherman: Bruce Gouldey Jr., Elroy, Pa., and Rhonda Leatherman, Perkasie, Pa., Sept. 11 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Jantzi/Streicher: Melissa Jantzi, Poole, Ont., and Alvin Streicher, Milverton, Ont., Sept. 4.

Keeler/Taydus: Kimberle Leah Keeler, Corry, Pa., and John Taydus, Pittsfield, Pa., Aug. 14 at Valley View Mennonite Church, Spartansburg, Pa.

Kolb/Snyder: Marcus Kolb, Phoenixville, Pa., and Carol Snyder, Phoenixville, Sept. 11 at Phoenixville.

Landes/Shreiner: Wendel Landes, Washington, and Cheryl Shreiner, Washington, Aug. 21 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Landis/Stefanowicz: Amy Beth Landis, Telford, Pa., and Jason Stefanowicz, Telford, Sept. 11 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Moshier/Yoder: Jason Moshier, Normal, Ill., and Laura Yoder, Goshen, Ind., Aug. 7 at Goshen College Mennonite Church.

Mullet/Roth: Scott Mullet, Hesston, Kan., and Holly Roth, Milford, Neb., Sept. 4 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford.

Newcomb/Yoder: Angela Newcomb, Washington, Iowa, and Jerran Yoder, Wellman, Iowa, Sept. 18.

Reeser/Wyse: Scott Reeser, Heyworth, Ill., and Angela Wyse, Archbold, Ohio, Aug. 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Steiner/Stjernholm: Angie Steiner, Apple Creek, Ohio, and Rick Stjernholm, Boulder, Colo., Sept. 4 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church,

Deaths

Byler, Frank, 83, Goshen, Ind., died July 29. Spouse: Anna Hallman Byler. Parents: Oliver and Rose Stoltzfus Byler (deceased). Other survivors: children Marjory Rutschman, Carol Stucky, Stanley, Mark, Dennis; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 4 at East Goshen Mennonite Church.

Detweiler, Oren, 101, Fairview, Mich., died Sept. 7 of heart failure. Spouse: Cora Detweiler (deceased). Parents: Sam and Malinda Detweiler (deceased). Survivors: children Carl, John, Lowell, Reuel, Mary Wyse; 21 grandchildren; 44 great-grandchildren; six great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 10 at Fairview Mennonite Church.

Gisel, Ella Short, 86, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 24. Survivors: son Merle; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 28 at Pettisville, Ohio.

Greaser, Sara, 78, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 13. Parents: Howard and Mary Clemmer Greaser (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 16 at Souderton.

Hartzler, Clifford Allen, 83, Hydro, Okla., died Sept. 5. Spouse: Velma Brunk Hartzler. Parents: Joseph and Martha Heatwole Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerilyn Ediger, Edith Entz, Curtis, Galen; 14 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Hydro.

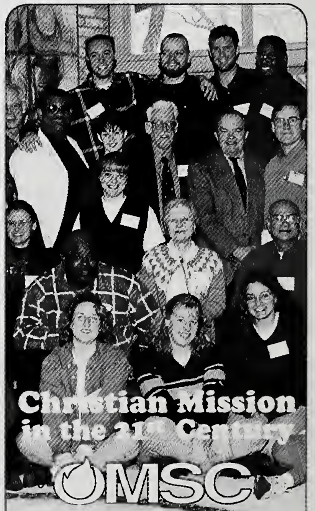
Kauffman, Dorcas Yoder, 94, Goshen, Ind., died July 19. Spouse: Irvin Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Eli and Elizabeth Troyer Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Grove, Lowell, John; 15 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 21 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Lehman, Leonard, 80, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 3. Spouse: Marie Martin Lehman. Parents: Arthur and Nora Weaver Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Letha; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 7 at East Goshen Mennonite Church.

Nafziger, Mildred Litwiller, 88, Normal, Ill., died Aug. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Simon Nafziger (deceased). Parents: John and Mary Litwiller (deceased). Survivors: son Gene; three grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 27 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Troyer, Marilyn Ringenberg, 63, New Carlisle, Ind., died Sept. 12 from complications of multiple sclerosis. Spouse: Marlin Troyer. Parents: William and Alta Smucker Ringenberg (deceased). Other survivors: children Stephanie Criswell, Debra Troyer, Susan Davis; one grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Grace United Methodist Church, South Bend, Ind.

Zehr, Vernon, 78, Milverton, Ont., died Aug. 17. Spouse: Katie Bender Zehr. Parents: Dan and Annie Brenneman Zehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Gerber, Sharon Roes, Hazel Gerber, Brenda Schultz, Ruth Gerber, Rosie Lichti, Rick Sharpe (foster son); 16 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont.



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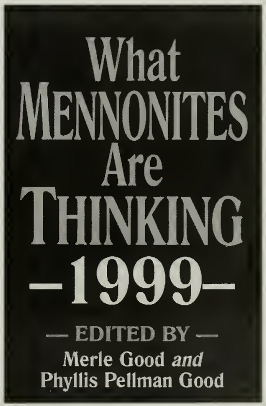
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THINKING
–1999–
— EDITED BY —
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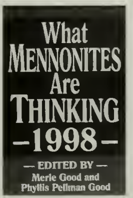
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- **Mennonite Service Learning Center** in San Antonio seeks ***director*** to coordinate service learning experiences including cross-cultural seminars with groups from across the U.S. Position open March 31, 2000. Application deadline Nov. 15, 1999. Call La Casa de Maria y Marta, 210-534-2064, for application and information.

- **Wellman Mennonite Church,** Wellman, Iowa, seeks a full-time ***pastor.*** Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. To inquire further or send resume, contact Wellman Mennonite Church, 1215 - 8th Ave., P.O. Box 122, Wellman, IA 52356; 319-646-2532; email wellmennonite@juno.com

- **Calvary Mennonite Church,** Aurora, Ore., located in a farming community, is seeking a ***senior pastor*** who is a people person, is Spirit-filled, relates well with youth and is open to ministering in spiritual gifts. We are a congregation of professional, semiprofessional and farming people. The senior pastor will work with an associate pastor and an administrative secretary. Our facilities include a new large gymnasium, Sunday school classrooms and 300-capacity beautiful sanctuary—all debt-free. We have a fully operating preschool ministry. Regular attendance is 145-175.

  Contact search committee chair: elder John Colvin, 503-266-1636.

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  Send resume or inquiry to Gene Kanagy, chair, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-924-9722 or 541-928-5541 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

- **The Lion & the Lamb Peace Arts Center,** at Bluffton College, seeks ***director:*** 12-month, half-time position, possibly leading to full-time, directing creative education center which promotes peace and international understanding through the arts and literature for children. Responsibilities: directing all aspects of the center, including educational programming for children and adults and maintenance of substantial literature and art collections. Qualifications: commitment to peace education, creative vision, entrepreneurial/management skills. Master's degree in education or peace studies preferred. Position opens Jan. 1, 2000. Consideration of applications begins immediately.

  Send application letter, resume and three letters of reference to President's Office, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817. For additional information see www.bluffton.edu. EOE

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center,** a Christian urban day school K-8, seeks ***principal*** for the 2000-2001 school year with commitment to the vision of providing quality Christian education with an Anabaptist emphasis in the ethnic and economic diversity of the city. Responsibilities include general administration, business management, educational supervision, supervision of overall maintenance and assistance in fund development. Administrator supervises staff of 12-16, coordinates volunteer services and reports to board of directors. Desirable qualifications: teaching and administrative experience, master's degree in education or related field and active membership in Mennonite or other Anabaptist church.

  Send letter of application and current resume to Search Committee, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For further information, call Leanne Schertz, board president, 309-383-2451.

- **Norma Mennonite Church,** a small southern New Jersey congregation comprised of families and singles of diverse backgrounds, seeks ***pastor.*** Position open October 1999. Please send resume to Norma Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 313, Norma, NJ 08347. For more information, contact Everett Buckwalter, email EB1322@juno.com

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  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin Dec. 1, 1999. AAEO employer

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EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY

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Toward a new U.S. Mennonitism

by Donald R. Steelberg

In the 1950s, long before many of us were thinking about church structures—or were even here—a group of young Mennonite scholars expressed concern about Anabaptism's degeneration into a denomination structured by its institutions.

These scholars, John Howard Yoder and Paul Peachey among them, likened the response to their opposition of this drift toward institutionalism to Zwingli's response to the Swiss Anabaptists. Yoder claimed that the distinctive Anabaptist position in the Reformation had not been one of doctrine, ethics or church discipline. The real disagreement was over the survival of church organization.

We stand at another historic juncture as the new Mennonite Church USA seeks to define itself through a churchwide study. The study guide "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" asks us to discuss how we see ourselves as exiles and aliens. But unless we understand ourselves as aliens to the corporate worldview, we will not move to challenging the dominant understanding of our corporation-model denomination, and little will be changed in envisioning a new Mennonite Church.

Localism: We need structures that serve the localism that governs today's organizational understandings. People are interested in what happens locally, what they can touch, feel and see. This localism is healthiest when nurtured by a worldwide outlook. In the day of the Internet we can be better connected to the world than ever before. But the key is that we make the connection ourselves.

Neither is this localism nationalism, though it knows the healthiness of working as a local, national group. Canada has led us to a new day. It does not deny the value of partnerships and could have perhaps even allowed better structures between our countries to achieve them if earlier attempts at localism had not been so misunderstood by the United States.

What we do not need is more top-down organization, as Yoder said already in the 1950s. In these intervening years, general boards and mission boards have come to treat church program as theirs rather than the churches'. It is their program on their timetable; it is about their projects, their studies. Unfortunately, many members of local churches could not care less.

Boards have not acted on their own. Congregations have gone along with them in this institutionalization. The spirit of our age has encouraged the large corporation, headed by the CEO. We have assumed that corporation logic should also be effective for our churches: centralization of planning, goals that serve a denominational plan rather than a myriad of local situations.

In a time of changing mores and uncertain belief, churches have hungered for a "thus says the Lord" and have ceded their responsibility to a centralized group. In a corporation age, it is natural to turn to the corporation for the enforcement of belief. But in this the churches have departed from early Anabaptism more than they know.

For example, consider the natural progression to a standardized clergy. Without ever discussing or voting on it, procedures for ordination have been ceded to the denomination. In this day of necessary accountability, centralization is to be expected. The danger comes when the center focuses more on such necessary issues as sexual mores—and sometimes on what it considers acceptable theology—than on spirituality, appropriate education, continuing education and healthy relationships of pastors with their churches and families. It is easy for the center to focus on pastors but difficult to learn how to dialogue with churches.

In a corporation age, it is natural to turn to the corporation for the enforcement of belief. But in this the churches have departed from early Anabaptism more than they know.

A servant organization will not impose a belief structure on its members (as some would like our conferences to do), but at its executive board levels it will rather witness winsomely to those beliefs. A servant organization will not allow the survival of the ecclesiastical structure to turn it into a hammer to construct a platform but will be a forum for dialogue.

Handmaid: The membership guidelines that were proposed and now will not be voted on until 2001 may be seen as an attempt to keep the organization as handmaid to the belief structure. If during these two years we can learn this lesson, it will be worth the wait.

If respondents to the study guide call for downsizing of denominational structures with their boards and administrative and communication departments and a comity arrangement for the areas of the world served by our several mission boards with much greater involvement of the congregations in their direction, will the denomination hear? How else will we deal with the Anabaptist question: Should the ecclesiastical organization survive?

In our day we think little is accomplished unless power speaks to power. Thus we are tempted by the corporation model. But change is in the air. Listen to the congregations. Listen to the Spirit speaking there.

Donald R. Steelberg lives in Wichita, Kan.

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Rich Preheim

Mennonitism is not a family reunion

It's a good thing the Soviets never tried to invade southeastern South Dakota. My kin might have put them through the sausage grinder (metaphorically speaking, of course).

Fifty years ago, while the spread of the Iron Curtain filled Americans with fear and trepidation, the descendants of brothers Peter and Solomon Preheim were growing in numbers around the neighboring communities of Freeman and Marion, S.D. That prompted the *Freeman Courier* to proclaim: "With Communism and the Preheim family increasing so fast, it became a question whether Communism or Preheimism will dominate [locally] in the future, but the last Preheim reunion settled the question and Preheimism will dominate."

The Preheims and their fellow Swiss-Volhynian neighbors had immigrated to the area as part of the great Mennonite exodus from Russia in the mid-1870s. By 1949, the Preheims were the largest family group in Salem Mennonite Church of rural Freeman, the mother congregation for the vast majority of the clan. Nearly 20 percent of the members (104 of 539) had the Preheim last name. That doesn't include the 60 unbaptized children or the 17 women with Preheim maiden names.

Regardless of religion, Preheim is fundamentally only a Swiss-Volhynian name.

So perhaps there was once a time when Preheimism—as well as Amstutzism, Hoferism, Neufeldism, Yoderism and others—could have been equated with Mennonitism (or, in some cases, Amishism or Hutterianism). For many North American church members who trace their family back to Europe, heritage can be an important part of faith identity. The experiences of believers persecuted, immigrating and pioneering elsewhere because of their religious convictions can shape particularly the beliefs of their direct descendants.

But as has happened with every "ethnic" Mennonite family, not all Preheims have remained in the church of their forebears. The reasons for their departures are myriad, such as moving to a location without a Mennonite congregation or disagreeing with tenets of the faith. The results can turn Preheim into, say, a Lutheran name—or it can even cease being a Christian name. Regardless of religion, Preheim is fundamentally only a Swiss-Volhynian name.

But while experiencing the departure of "ethnic" Mennonites over the years, the church has been blessed by the addition of people who, even though they weren't related to anyone, were attracted by the emphases of discipleship, peace and service. Or maybe such people were drawn by a caring, nurturing local congregation. Or maybe they married into it.

In the last 50 years, Salem Mennonite Church has seen its membership decrease to 434, a trend experienced by many rural congregations. And only 43 Preheims remain on the rolls. But in the meantime, the congregation has added Aughenbaugh, Li and Schmeichel, among others. Those names—two German, one Chinese—are now as equally Mennonite as Preheim and Yoder.

Similar developments are happening in other historically "ethnic" congregations across North America. At the same time, congregations where "ethnic" Mennonites are not predominant, and oftentimes not even present, are proliferating, bringing freshness and vitality to a church that can get bogged down in tradition and culture.

There are Chinese Mennonites in Boston and Nigerian Mennonites in Los Angeles, Hmong in Minnesota and Hopi in Arizona, African-Americans in Chicago and French-Canadians in Montreal. And that's just on this continent. Consider that 55 percent of the global Mennonite family lives in 46 countries outside the historic enclaves of North America and Europe—most of them worshiping, serving and even flourishing without a Pennsylvania Dutch or Low German person in their midst.

All of which requires a rethinking how to play the Mennonite game. As Ervin Beck points out (page 6), it is about making connections. Perhaps making connections, building community, was easier when we assumed we were all related. But while the blood of family connects Preheim Mennonites, it is the blood of Christ and our shared religious beliefs that connect us with Mennonites of all ethnicities everywhere. That is our church.

As for making connections with those Preheims who aren't Mennonite, that is why we have family reunions.—*rp*

the Mennonite

October 12, 1999

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worship

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Violent responses

The article on "Nonviolent Evangelism" (Sept. 14) left me shaking my head in wonder and disbelief. If I were to punch someone in the nose or kick them in the shins to attempt to make them Christian, I would be guilty of violent evangelism (an effort, I concede, that would probably fail). I have never known a violent evangelist in my life, however, and with all the graphic pictures of real violence around us daily, the title of the article seems ludicrous.

You may resent it if my political persuasion, my choice of color, my choice of music or other likes and dislikes are different from yours. However, I have not done violence to you by voicing my preferences or even attempting to sway you to my beliefs. When it comes to religious preference, you may resent it more, especially if my attempt is to sway you from a faith. How do we attempt to convert people and attract them to the Mennonite faith—the one I consider the most valid response to the teachings of Jesus Christ—without doing violence to them in your estimation?

Nonviolence is clearly a belief that sets us apart. It has now, however, become a catch phrase, something that can always be counted on to get our attention. It has become grossly overused and misused. Let's not label attempts to bring others to faith, even if they be clumsy or not well thought out, as violent. Expressions of differences may lead to disagreement, even hurt feelings, but do not constitute real violence. You seem to be calling us to inaction for fear of offending anyone with our evangelistic efforts. This is wrong. Do not discourage evangelism, something we are called to, by labeling it violent.—*Sam J. Sullenberger, West Liberty, Ohio*

The people mentioned in "Nonviolent Evangelism" are certainly entitled to their various feelings on the issue. But in all fairness to those who served as evangelists, another side should be seen. My memories are of men who preached the Word with conviction because they were concerned for lost souls and spiritual growth of Christians.

Let me share my own experience. I was 9 or 10 when my father insisted I join a baptism class against my wishes. Some years later, when the Holy Spirit convicted me of the need for salvation, I kept resisting since I was already a church member. In 1951, when I was 18, George R. Brunk II came to Lancaster, Pa., for his first tent crusade. I didn't think he was violent. I only knew I wanted in my life what he was talking about. The night I went forward is still vivid in my mind—the heavy burden of sin was gone. I personally appreciate the many years Brother Brunk and a number of others served as evangelists.—*Elsie Pennington, Lancaster, Pa.*

Channels of communication

This is a letter to those who have shared their concerns over J. Denny Weaver's research project on atonement. I am remembering a book published some time ago titled *Peace Child.* Written by a missionary in some island setting, it told about a people whose pattern it was to make peace between warring tribes by the chief of one offering his firstborn son to the chief of the other. This cultural pattern became the vehicle for the good news to be comprehended by that people group.

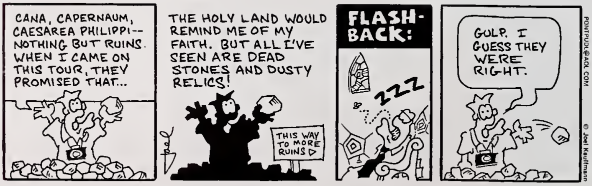
Much has been written in various letters about the blood atonement aspect of Jesus' death. Atonement through sacrifice was, of course, a Jewish cultural pattern and therefore one that communicated powerfully for them. It also works for those of us who have been taught the Scriptures in that way and understand the powerful imagery. But what works as a vehicle for the good news for one person or group of people may not work adequately for another.

I wonder if Weaver's work might be something like that: a vehicle that God may use for a group of people to understand the good news who might not be able to understand it in any other way. If God can use it in this way, then we ought not oppose it. If somehow this is not of God, then it will come to nothing. In either case, I think we can let God take care of it (Acts 5:33-39).

The question I ask myself, and invite others to ask themselves, is, "How am I bearing the good news of God's saving love and grace to those in my community, my family, my small world?" Perhaps it's time for us to quit picking

Pontius' Pilgrimage

by Joel Kauffmann


CANA, CAPERNAUM, CAESAREA PHILIPPI--NOTHING BUT RUINS. WHEN I CAME ON THIS TOUR, THEY PROMISED THAT...
THE HOLY LAND WOULD REMIND ME OF MY FAITH. BUT ALL I'VE SEEN ARE DEAD STONES AND DUSTY RELICS!
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readers say

at each other and get on with the task that Weaver has taken up: communicating the good news to those who for some reason have not understood it yet.—*June Thomsen, Bluffton, Ohio*

Church language

Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp are making a valuable suggestion when they say, "The word 'conference' may be more inviting than the word 'church' " ("Why Integration: A Sociological Perspective," Sept. 14). For people like us Mennonites who take the Bible seriously, misunderstandings may arise when words from the Bible are used in ways the Bible does not use them. Jesus emphasizes the importance of the careful use of words, and "church" is an extremely important word.

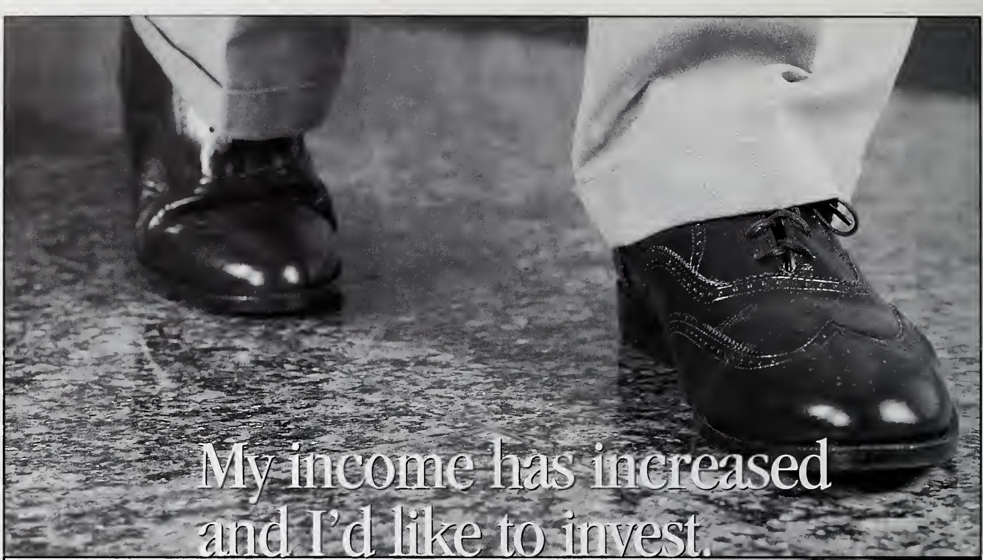
Mennonites have often been sensitive about stretching the word "church" to designate a building. Whenever we do, we keep in mind that by church we really mean the local congregation meeting in that building. We have not been as sensitive about adapting the word "church" to designate a denomination.

The late John E. Zercher once wrote that the New Testament knows only two uses of the word "church": the local congregation and the church universal. When we unknowingly use an important biblical word in a nonbiblical way, we risk serious confusion. As Kreider and Lapp seem to suggest, we may need to reconsider the use of the biblical word "church" as a name for a denomination.—*Merle E. Brubaker, Dillsburg, Pa.*

Idolatry?

In my perception, unity has become an idol. I sense we are being called to worship unity and put it first in our lives.—*Lloyd Weaver, Newport News, Va.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt



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—Atlanta, April 1996

Morning run from the Renaissance Hotel

by Jeff Gundy

Not quite lost, but I turned right
when left would have been better.
There's concertina wire above

the red clay of the construction sites,
the parking lots by the carryouts
glitter wetly with broken glass.

The men on the corners don't seem busy.
Crossing back over the highway I swing
right into the street to give a man
in a hooded sweatshirt some room:

"Say something man, I *would* have reacted."

Sorry, I say, hold my open hands up
and run on not looking. I turn
on Peachtree Street and run straight north

and soon I'm on the 22nd floor, safe
in the shower. The man who warned me
is still walking in his blue sweatshirt

and black cap when I'm settled with my coffee.
Tomorrow I'll be home in time for soccer
and the parking lots will gleam and sparkle

in the sun all day, the razor wire above
the red mud glinting like diamonds
looped around a chest torn open,

the poor fool awake but too weak to resist.

Jeff Gundy teaches English at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Photo by Marilyn Nolt

Worship for all ages

Experiencing the story: Symon Flaming lights a candle at the worship centerpiece during a summer worship service at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church. Eleanor Snyder is at far right.

by Ferne Burkhardt

Sunday morning worship at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church was different this summer. Arthur Boers, pastor of this rural congregation, says, "Summer is a really good time to try new things."

The worship ministry committee, nudged by the fact that Arthur was on a summer leave, decided to involve laypeople from the congregation rather than bring in guest speakers. They planned other changes, too: The entire service would include children; everyone would participate in an "experiencing the story" activity, replacing the traditional children's time; and they moved the chairs from many rows facing the front of the sanctuary to a few angled rows on each side, all facing a worship centerpiece in the middle.

What stayed constant was the basic structure of the service, with hymns, prayers, Scripture reading, sermon and responses continuing in fixed places.

Since there would be a different speaker each Sunday, planners settled on a theme for the entire summer to achieve continuity. They chose "God's People Surprised and Changed," based on a worship guide for a summer series published by Faith & Life Press. It is a collection of conversion stories from the Bible.

One hymn, "God Loves All His Many People," was used each Sunday. It also gave continuity, enhanced the idea of diversity and captured the interest of children, particularly since rhythm instruments were handed out to old and young to accompany the music. Song leader Lois Cressman's 4-year-old daughter, Serena, soon began singing the song at home.

While rhythm and melody appealed to the ear, the worship centerpiece's colorful flowers and fragrant, lighted candles stimulated other senses. One Sunday, worshipers tasted a variety of breads used to illustrate the story of Peter's vision before he met Cornelius.

"I liked the worship center[piece] in the midst of the people," says Eleanor Snyder, who led one worship. "People could look where they wished."

At the outset, planners invited people of all ages to create a painting to illustrate one of the stories. All summer a gallery of artwork graced the walls surrounding the sanctuary. The illustrations provided a focal point for each story—and an interesting diversion for meandering eyes and minds. An interpretation of Saul's conversion by Tracey Cressman, 9, hung in a prime spot.

"It's one of my favorite stories. I thought it would be fun to draw a picture," says Tracey. "And I liked the stories. Sermons are harder to understand."

Her sister Shannon, 12, found the different styles of the speakers interesting and liked the arrangement of the chairs, which allowed her "to look at people across the room, the pictures and lots of things." Arthur says the singing was better, too.

Most people found the informal setting a nice change, but a few people complained about having to twist their necks to see the speaker, positioned at one end of the rows of chairs. One self-proclaimed introvert says the more intimate setting was a challenge.

Most were surprised and delighted with the gifts that emerged from laypeople.

"I'm excited and proud to be part of a con-

> [Saul's conversion is] one of my favorite stories. I thought it would be fun to draw a picture. And I liked the stories. Sermons are harder to understand.
>
> *—Tracey Cressman, 9*

gregation with so many competent laypeople," says Twila Lebold. "I had a sense of loyalty to and support for those who were doing the presentations."

Most presenters delved into their personal experience. Eleanor's recent Celtic spiritual pilgrimage influenced her thoughts on Mary Magdalene's encounter with the risen Christ. At her invitation worshipers wandered through the church's cemetery looking for symbols of resurrection and shared some reflections on their return from the activity.

Karyn Mierau connected her work with pregnant teens to the story of Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan woman. She emphasized the profoundly open sharing that engaged Jesus and the woman and the importance of listening. She asked adults and children to form pairs or triads to listen to each other's stories and pray together.

One service concluded with a pilgrimage around the sanctuary and a communal blessing, taken from the story of Rebekah, as everyone joined raised hands.

> One service concluded with a pilgrimage around the sanctuary and a communal blessing, taken from the story of Rebekah, as everyone joined raised hands.

Pauline Bauman, who led the planning, anticipated a gap between her ideal and reality. Even with efforts to make the services child-friendly, she knew some families would attend only a few times and others not at all.

Amos Snyder, 78, says, "It doesn't matter what you do, lots of people will be missing. In the past, people tried not to miss a Sunday for the whole year." But he and Naomi, his wife, 79, enjoyed the summer series.

"Each presenter did a lot of work and brought something broader than just reading the story," says Naomi.

At an evaluation meeting in September, almost everyone could cite an "experiencing the story" activity. Even though attendance was not significantly different from other years, they concluded that it was a good summer, with meaningful worship for those who chose to make it a part of their Sundays.

Ferne Burkhardt, Petersburg, Ont., is editorial assistant and Eastern Canada regional editor for Canadian Mennonite. *This article was a joint assignment of* The Mennonite *and* Canadian Mennonite.

Worship is for everyone

Including children in the life of the congregation is one of Eleanor Snyder's passions. She is a member at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church and helped plan a summer worship series there designed to be more child-friendly.

"Worship is for everyone," says Eleanor. "One of the most important reasons to include children is that children have a spirituality that needs to be nurtured." Yet too often we don't offer music kids can relate to or use silence in our worship, she says.

"If Mennonites think the Word is the most important [element], we exclude an entire group by the language we use, by long sermons. Worship is not just for the intellect but for all the senses," she says, such as visual (banners) or touch (passing the peace).

Making worship child-friendly is not dumbing down, insists Eleanor. It is planning for other ways of encountering God, who delights in our attempts.

Churches are thinking more about including children in worship, she says, but they tend to stop at having a short children's story. Children then go back to their seats, where they tune out for the rest of the service. Some churches have children leave the worship service when the sermon begins. "That sends a strong message that the sermon is not for them," says Eleanor. "When do they learn to listen?"

As director of children's education for the General Conference Mennonite Church, Eleanor gets some requests for "children's church" resources. "We don't publish any," she says.

She sees worship as one of the primary intergenerational activities left, yet it is one of the hardest barriers to break through, she laments. "We tend to ghettoize children," she says, collect them for the children's story, then ignore them.

"Children are not the church of tomorrow but the church of today. If we don't include them in our worship, we won't have them tomorrow," Eleanor says. She believes strongly that we must be open to changing our worship to be more holistic.

"We have a perception that worship is for adults," Eleanor says. A leader who has moved beyond that perception is a key factor in bringing about change, she believes.

Eleanor's goal is to expand the vision that worship is everybody's time. She has compiled a list of 75 ideas that can help achieve that end. She may be reached at 57 Stirling Ave. North, Kitchener, ON N2H 3G4; phone/fax: 519-745-9025.—*Ferne Burkhardt*

Marilyn Nolt, for illustration only

Churches thinking more about including children in worship tend to stop at having a short children's story, says Eleanor Snyder.

RNS

The flock

Reflections on a school shooting

by Kristen Johnson Ingram

The goldfinches arrived the same day the children died. I had my binoculars and was heading outside to look at the darting little yellow creatures when I heard the TV say, "This is CNN breaking news … shooting at Thurston High School in Springfield, Ore."

Tragedy was only four blocks from my house. Thurston High is one of the nicest schools in the county, surrounded by houses with rhododendrons in the yards, and small white churches, and hills forested with Douglas fir. There are fir trees on the campus, too, and kids in shorts and sweatshirts, and bright spring grass and cars parked on the gravel.

That morning, hundreds of parents were swarming over the grounds, looking for their children, remembering how they hollered before school about the popcorn mess in the den, remembering how they were in the bathroom and didn't say goodbye, remembering they were cross about the failing grade in chemistry. Their faces were studies in terror; they only knew their kids were in the school, nothing else.

> The parents' faces were studies in terror; they only knew their kids were in the school, nothing else.

When Kip Kinkle, a sweet-faced 15-year-old, walked into Thurston High with a semiautomatic rifle and began shooting students, one boy crawled out of the cafeteria, slightly wounded, and called his dad on the phone in the hall. "I'm not hurt bad," the boy said. "Come and get me." That man was the only parent on the campus that morning who knew for sure his son wasn't dead.

I had to go somewhere, and as I drove past the end of the block by the school, police cars and ambulances clogged the road. I saw a friend of mine drive by in a hurry. He is a Red Cross volunteer, and I knew he'd been paged, just as he was paged to go to Texas and Georgia and Illinois when floods or hurricanes struck.

My cell phone rang in the car; someone was looking for my husband, a relief chaplain at the Springfield hospital. They needed him desperately to deal with parents. I gave the caller his pager number and switched on the radio. I heard that one student had been pronounced dead, the announcer said, and 23 others had been transported to the hospitals in Springfield and in Eugene, which is our twin city.

A parishioner at our church is a Spanish teacher at the other Springfield high school, and she was Faith Kinkle's best friend. Faith, Kip's mother, now lay dead in her house along with her husband; police and ambulance personnel surrounded but could not enter the home to remove their bodies because their son had booby-trapped the house with bombs.

The horror: As I drove onto the freeway, I saw another flock of goldfinches, hurtling through the air. I wondered if they had been to the school, if their bright little black eyes had beheld the shootings, the horror, the blood, if they had flown past a fearful parent or brightened the moment of a weeping teacher.

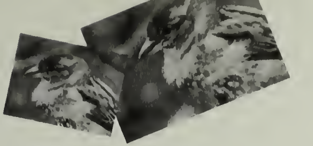
The cell phone rang again. It was the blood bank, looking for my husband. I gave them his pager number and said the Lord's Prayer over and over because I didn't know what else to pray.

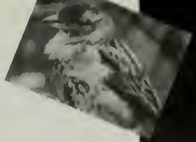
That evening I cut the roses and lilies and snowballs and irises in my yard and wrapped their stems with foil. I walked to the high school and thrust them into a corner of the fence. There were four other bouquets, two stuck through the wire fence, like mine, and two placed on the ground. The narrow street was full of cars, driving past to look at the school, and high school kids who hadn't been shot, hanging out, holding each other, weeping, and huge TV sound trucks. Reporters for CNN and NBC were standing under tarps supported by metal poles, speaking to cameras and being broadcast all over the country.

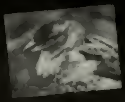
After I stuck the flowers in the fence, I went to see my friend, the Spanish teacher, who taught with Faith Kinkle. She was lying on her family room couch, crying; she looked like a rag, tossed against the cushions. Her son—just confirmed at church, having taken the class where I am the catechist—said he had taken karate lessons from Kip.

"He was nice," the boy said, and went to his room.

My own son called when I got home. He was taking his boys to the coast for the day, he said. Although they attend schools across town, they were upset. The oldest boy, ready to enter high school, was afraid. He had







announced that he wouldn't go to school any more, saying that someone would think, "Cool! Let's do it here." In the first three weeks after the shooting, at least one gun was impounded from a student at some school in the county every day.

Another parishioner is an ICU nurse at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eugene. She told me on Sunday that neither she nor any other nurses or doctors were prepared for the sight of all those kids, shot in the heads and chests and abdomens and legs and hands and necks.

My grandsons came to my house the next day, Memorial Day, while their parents helped someone move. I asked my son if I could take the boys down to see the school fence; he said no, then called later to say maybe it would be a good idea. We played Pictionary, then I took them to the supermarket, where they bought bouquets, which were marked about $2 higher than normal.

"The florists are loving this," someone in line said.

The fence that had held four bouquets was now covered with flowers, teddy bears, signs, posters, poetry, photographs. Someone had hung a red Thurston graduation gown and cap near the gate, with a sign that said, "In memory of those who won't get to graduate." Someone had posted a copy of the Ten Commandments, with the scrawled comment, "This is the answer." My grandsons and I, like most of the people there, wore loops of sky-blue ribbon that have come to mean, in Oregon and even across the country, "Let it end here."

"I'm moving in with you," my grandson Victor said as we pushed our flowers into a notch in the fence. "I'm going to live with you during the week and you can home-school me."

I convinced him that this was not a possibility, and he said, well, then he'd just stay home and study on his own.

"Don't be afraid," I said when we got home. I added that perhaps his fear would make him vigilant and keep him alive. I said his creativity was strong and he would make decisions that saved him from disaster. I quoted statistics and recited other silly facts.

He gazed at me awhile, then said I'd have to face the fact that schools weren't safe.

Missile crisis: I was suddenly transported back 36 years to the week of the Cuban missile crisis, when my schoolteacher husband had to stay late for a meeting to figure out what to do with the kids when we got bombed. My son, Victor's father, was 6, in first grade, and he came home late, covered with dirt.

I accused him of fighting, something he sometimes did on the way home from school.

"No," he said, "I wasn't fighting. I had to pass the high school on the way home and a bell rang, and I thought it was an air raid alarm. I jumped in the gutter to duck and cover."

As if ducking and covering would protect you from a nuclear blast, I thought as I wrapped him in my arms. That night I told my husband that I never wanted to see one of our children afraid that way again.

But now I've looked into my grandson's face, and he knows fear, too. Rational, logical fear. He doesn't have to be afraid of the Bomb, because now kids just blow each other away in the school cafeteria.

I've looked into my grandson's face, and he knows fear, too. Rational, logical fear. He doesn't have to be afraid of the Bomb, because now kids just blow each other away in the school cafeteria.

"Look," Victor said suddenly, and pointed out the back window. A myriad of goldfinches surged through the air, lighting on branches, where they turned into yellow leaves, kiting from tree to tree, swooping down on the bird feeder, ignoring the swallows that nest in my garage eaves and that usually warn off most other birds.

"It's a celebration," Max, the 8-year-old, said. "It's a bird party."

I gave Victor my ancient, heavy binoculars, the ones I was going to grab when the school shooting happened. He adjusted them and tried to follow the fast, joyful birds as they flew and climbed the air and rose up like clouds of yellow mosquitoes.

"Whoa," he said, a word he says whenever he's amazed or impressed.

I made stringy beef tacos, and we prayed for Kip Kinkle. It started to rain, and the goldfinches disappeared into the woods.

Let it end here, I thought. Please. Let it end so they don't have to be afraid.

Goldfinches usually move on after a week; this year, for no reason the Audubon society could give, they stayed all summer. I'm not one who looks for signs, but the fluttering yellow of their flights gave me hope. Hope not only that guardian angels will protect our children or that movies will quit glorifying violence, but also a daring hope that men and women will beat weapons into plowshares and teach their children to love God and one another. Maybe then our kids could grow up without fear.

Kristen Johnson Ingram lives in Springfield, Ore.

Earthquake brings out Goshen College generosity, silliness as campus raises $24,000 for Turkey relief

GOSHEN—Christy Risser was shaken. While in Turkey last year on a service assignment, she was in an earthquake. Then another one in August killed three of her friends, including Jale Karacengel, a 17-year-old girl who was considering attending Goshen College.

As she mourned, Risser, now technical director of the college's Umble Center, and others on campus went to work to respond. At the initiative of president Shirley Showalter, Goshen's opening convocation last month featured an auction of three lanyards—popular accessories for clipping items such as keys or whistles around the neck—to raise money for Turkey earthquake relief. Risser pledged to raise $300. Shirley Hershberger, admissions office manager, pledged $250 for another lanyard.

Then Ryan Stiffney, sophomore from Goshen, outdid them all. In bidding on another lanyard, he pledged to raise $5,000 during September.

The efforts of Risser, Hershberger and Stiffney far surpassed expectations. The three led a fund-raising campaign that ended Oct. 4 and reached silly extremes, netting more than $24,000 for Mennonite Central Committee's Turkey earthquake relief project. Stiffney and his fellow students raised $16,000. Risser and the faculty contributed $5,700, and Hershberger generated $700 from staff members. Offerings brought an additional $1,700.

"It shows the idea of community works at least in some fashion here," says Risser, who received contributions from $1 to $1,000 from 40 current or retired faculty members.

Stiffney says he expected to be able to raise the money, but he has been surprised by the student involvement. Checks have arrived in the mail from California, Iowa and Elkhart, Ind. But students have also given him money. Stiffney found $500 cash on his desk, given by another student. Janna Bowman, senior from Bally, Pa., got a check for $500 from a man she didn't know. About 150 people paid to eat at a barbecue. Some students hosted a rock concert at their house.

About 20 people took part in an "Uncommon-a-thon": students participating in a variety of "uncommon" activities for five hours for pledges. Their efforts raised $3,000.

Tim Godshall, senior from Mount Joy, Pa., rolled fuzzy dice 3,287 times and netted about $1,000 in pledges. "I like doing ridiculous things for a long period of time," he says.

Lyle Miller

While Goshen College music professor Beverly K. Lapp (right) watches , students James Eash (left) and Jason Rhodes play TV video games on the campus' Schrock Plaza Sept. 18 to raise money for Mennonite Central Committee's earthquake relief efforts in Turkey. Eash and Rhodes got $200 in pledges as part of a schoolwide campaign.

Godshall wasn't alone. Bowman blew bubbles. Three first-year students rode the elevator and played games for five hours. Others sang the soundtrack to the Broadway musical *Rent.* James Eash, junior from Newton, Kan., and Jason Rhodes, senior from Winfield, Ill., moved their couch and TV outside to play video games and watch football, raising about $200. The "Uncommon-a-thon" concluded with a potluck dubbed "Goshen College Feeds for the $5,000."

Participants noted that it's not possible to reconcile the silliness of their fund-raising activities with the tragedy they raised money for. "Our existence is silly compared with [earthquake recovery]," Stiffney says.

Risser has experienced that. She spent more than a year in Europe and the Middle East with the Reconciliation Walk, a campaign to apologize to Muslims and Jews for the Crusades. She was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions and the Mennonite Middle East Reference Group. A quake struck while Risser was in Turkey for 3½ months.

"The buildings crumble like a saltine cracker in your fist," she says. "It's horrible to see."

After August's devastating quake, Risser did what she could. "I know my physical presence in Turkey wouldn't have been helpful," she says. "Trying to coordinate giving has been a way to be with them in spirit."—*Marshall V. King*

L.A. church growth generates tithe

Talk about a growth spurt. It took only a year for Los Angeles Faith Chapel to outgrow its former meeting place.

The building had been purchased with the help of a loan from Church Extension Services of the General Conference Mennonite Church. When the congregation sold the building and bought a bigger one this year, the congregation gave a tithe of the profit to Pacific Southwest Conference.

The $1,500 contribution is in "appreciation for what the Mennonite church has given to me and to the church and to others," says pastor Chuwang Pam.

The congregation, made up largely of West Africans and African-Americans, wants to expand its ministry to Los Angeles' Skid Row by opening a homeless-rehabilitation shelter.—*Panorama*

Mennonite Men

October 1999

Mennonite Men is an organization of the General Conference Mennonite Church that aims to provide an Anabaptist perspective on manhood that speaks to current issues. Its goals are to promote Christian growth, provide service opportunities, church missions and education among the men of the church. Mennonite Men also helps resource men's groups in local congregations, promotes men's resources written or presented by Mennonites and helps develop materials on specific men's issues.

A priority for Mennonite Men is to provide church building grants to newer congregations through its Tenth Man church building program. Several hundred donors each give an average of $200 per year for this work.

10th MAN
Church Building Program

Grants approved for congregations in Canada, Ukraine, and U.S.

Mennonite Men officers and representatives approved three Tenth Man church building grants for 1999-2000. Grants were awarded to Covenant Mennonite, Winkler, Man.; Evangelical Mennonite, Zaporozhye, Ukraine; and Grace Mennonite, Lacey Spring, Va.

Covenant Mennonite Church members

Covenant Mennonite Church provides alternative worship

Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man., was begun by the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church in 1981 as an intentional church planting project. The intent was that the new church would be a smaller, more intimate fellowship featuring strong congregational involvement, lay leadership to begin with, and an informal family-oriented worship style.

The people of Covenant Mennonite Church have experienced faith development through involvement in church life. Special work projects and fellowship events have helped develop a feeling of community.

A crisis developed in 1997 when Covenant's pastor resigned, and members also learned that the longtime home of the church, Winkler Bible Institute, was closing. The congregation cried out to God for help. Within several months the church was able to purchase the Trinity Lutheran Church building with assistance from the community and a Tenth Man grant. The pastoral needs of the congregation were also supplied, with Kelvin Dyck hired as pastor.

"Our congregation has been thrilled with the support we have received from conference leaders, local congregations and the community at large," says Garry W. Bueckert, co-chair of Covenant Mennonite Church. "We have been truly thankful for the financial support promised us by Mennonite Men.

A Tenth Man grant of $16,400 Cdn. has been approved for Covenant Mennonite.

Evangelical Mennonite shares the gospel of Jesus with the people of Zaporozhye

by Melanie Zuercher

Aug. 18, 1996, was a long-awaited day for at least 10 people in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, a city of 900,000 and formerly the center of the Chortitza Mennonite colony. On that day, Peter Kehler, at that time a worker with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), and Willi Peters, a Mennonite pastor from Novosibirsk, Siberia, baptized 10, marking the founding of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Zaporozhye.

The group, which held its first worship service in spring 1993, now has more than 50 members and an average attendance on Sunday mornings of 75 to 80, say Dorothy and Jake Unrau, COM workers who began pastoring the church in early 1999.

Almost all the congregation's charter members were raised in Mennonite homes in the Chortitza colony, which most Mennonites were forced to leave after the Soviet Red Army recaptured the area from the Germans in 1943. A number were deported to Siberia.

Ministries of the church include two Bible studies during the week, a sewing project done by two women of the church who sew for others using donated material from North America, and children's Sunday school.

The congregation currently meets in the assembly hall of a school. It is a convenient location for public transportation, but with a capacity of 90, the Zaporozhye congregation is on the brink of outgrowing its space.

They have begun actively searching for a new facility that could also be used as a center for Mennonite Central Committee work in Ukraine.

"We wish to share the gospel of Jesus with the people of our city, and we want our church to grow and become a strong Mennonite presence for God and for good to the people of the Ukraine," write the Unraus. "We invite you to pray for us and the church family, that God mold us into a church that reaches out to the lost, regardless of their racial or language background."

Evangelical Mennonite Church will receive the first overseas church building grant for $12,000 U.S.

Jake and Dorothy Unrau (ar right) visit Anna Dushko (center), a member of the Zaporozhye church.

Baptismal service at Evangelical Mennonite Church, Zaporozhye

Grace reaches people "on the edge"

by Richard Early

Lacey Spring, Va., a quiet, small rural community five miles north of Harrisonburg, Va., would hardly seem to church planting experts to be a strategic location to start a new church. However, the Spirit that Jesus sent "blows where it pleases" (John 3:8), and can lead in the establishment of new ministries in the most unlikely places. This certainly has been our story. Grace Mennonite Fellowship was born out of a communi-

Grace Mennonite Fellowship baptism at Highland Retreat Camp

ty Bible study on the book of Acts in February 1997. By April, 30 people in the Bible study experienced a personal Pentecost and were asking God for direction, sensing a call to plant a church with a particular vision for outreach to "people on the edge."

On Sept. 7, 1997, Grace Mennonite Fellowship began officially as a church meeting for worship at Lacey Spring Elementary School. Since that time, Grace has grown from 30 to almost 100 people in attendance each Sunday. Thirteen people were baptized and joined the church on Aug. 1, 1999. One of those baptized was Michael "Buz" Arobgast, who accepted Christ on Dec. 20, 1997. Prior to being saved he struggled with alcohol and a bitter spirit. Now Buz is so turned on for Jesus that he has brought a number of new people into the church. The most exciting thing that has happened is seeing people delivered and healed of addictive behaviors.

Groundbreaking for Grace Fellowship's new church building

With the purchase of 10 acres in December 1997, the church broke ground in April 1999 for a new building. When we received the news in May that Mennonite Men had awarded us a grant of $30,000, it was affirmation that God was leading us in the right direction. *Richard Early is pastor of Grace Mennonite Fellowship.*

Partnerships are for real

Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., is celebrating its 125th anniversary in a big way. They've asked, "How can we express appreciation for 125 years of God's faithfulness since helping our first members make the trek from Russia to Kansas?" They've answered, "Let us find another new congregation that needs help."

God's Spirit led them to Christ Community Mennonite Church, Schaumburg, Ill., located some 10 miles west of Chicago's O'Hare airport, in a bustling, multicultural community.

And one good thing led to another:

- Their decision helped underwrite the Mennonite Men Tenth Man grant of $50,000 to Christ Community's building project.
- A carload from the congregation has visited the new church.
- The two churches' youth groups met at the St. Louis 99 Youth Convention to do a joint service project.
- Pastor LeRoy Kennel says that Christ Community Mennonite Church has had a "pivotal experience." Partnerships like this make church planting happen, he adds.

Dean Linsenmeyer, pastor of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, adds, "From our side of the partnership, it has been an invigorating and uplifting opportunity to pass along the aid that we received in our early years in America. It has really become the rallying point of our 125th celebrations! And beyond the celebrations, we look forward to being sister congregations for the long haul."

Looking ahead

Mennonite Church

Canadians partner with Tenth Man *by Walter Franz*

It is a blessing to be able to work together with the staff and the executive committee of Mennonite Men on the Tenth Man program. In Canada, we have very few organized men's groups. We do, however, have an interest in participating in the Tenth Man program and supporting church building programs within the context of the larger Mennonite church.

Mennonite Men has graciously allowed us to enter into this program through a partnership arrangement. Grant applications from Canadian Mennonite churches are first processed and approved by our Outreach and Church Planting Committee in consultation with area conference mission leaders. Monies raised in Canada are receipted by Mennonite Church Canada.

A number of choices and opportunities face us regarding the Tenth Man program as Mennonite Church Canada takes shape. How will this program relate to, or be a part of, the larger mission context of Mennonite Church Canada? What name can be given to such a program to communicate its vision and invite participation from all age groups and across cultural and gender lines? How will we promote this program and enlist supporters?

I am excited about the potential for Canadian partnership with the Tenth Man program. I am also enthused about members of the Mennonite church pooling their resources to help Mennonite churches overseas obtain facilities for their ministries. It is exciting for Canadians that the first overseas Tenth Man project is in Zaporozhye, Ukraine, the cradle of Mennonites in the former Soviet Union. I look forward to building on the partnership opportunities that are open to us.

Walter Franz is executive secretary of the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada.

There is a growing interest in Mennonite Church area conferences in the Mennonite Men and Tenth Man programs. The Mennonite Church does not have an equivalent to General Conference Mennonite Men, but there are congregations and area conferences with active men's groups. "In the past year I have visited with staff in 14 MC area conferences," says Jim Gingerich, Mennonite Men coordinator. "There has been general affirmation for Mennonite Men and the Tenth Man program as the group that will speak to men's issues in the new denomination. Several area conferences have taken official action to affirm Mennonite Men."

J. Ron Byler, associate general secretary of the Mennonite Church General Board, suggests, "One unique contribution the General Conference will bring to our integrated church life is Mennonite Men."

350 attend Mennonite Men dinner at St. Louis

About 350 men participated in the Mennonite Men's dinner and business meeting at St. Louis 99. Vice-president Kim Claassen, Whitewater, Kan., led the meeting. Tom and Lois Harder, co-pastors at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan., presented several inspirational numbers and led group singing.

Treasurer Carl Thieszen, North Newton, Kan., presented his two-year report, including $108,825 U.S. in grants to four congregations. LeRoy Kennel, pastor of Christ Community Mennonite Church, Schaumburg, Ill., shared about the encouragement the Tenth Man grant was to their congregation.

Coordinator update

- The need of new churches building their first meetinghouse far exceeds the grants available.
- Agora Christian Fellowship, Columbus, Ohio, has been approved for a grant of $50,000.
- Plans are to become more involved with men's ministries ecumenically.
- For more information about Mennonite Men, visit our web site at www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/mm or contact the Newton office, PO Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Jim Gingerich, editor
Mennonite Men insert in ***The Mennonite***
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Web site:
www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/mm/index.htm

Yes, I would like to help new Mennonite churches!

☐ I want to give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year, to help new Mennonite churches buy or build their first permanent meetinghouse. I understand I will be contacted when my contribution is needed.

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Address ____

Phone ________________ Home congregation ____________________

Return this form to: Tenth Man, c/o Carl Thieszen, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117 or Conference of Mennonites in Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Hopes, fears meet in first CLC gathering

Committee to draft membership proposal by May 2000

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—At the end of two days of worship, prayer, confession and discussion, two women provided a model for resolving the impasse on membership in Mennonite Church USA. Illinois Conference representatives Elaine Bryant and Susan Sommer stood before the first meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) and committed themselves to daily prayer for one another, despite their differing beliefs on homosexuality.

"We are willing to work together on other, more pressing issues," Bryant said.

Added Sommer, "We believe that one day we will be in complete unity."

As expected, membership was a major issue for the nearly 70 people at the Oct. 1-2 gathering in Kansas City. While Bryant and Sommer will be praying for each other, a committee of CLC members will be working on a membership proposal based on ideas presented by table groups during the meeting.

Among the ideas suggested were provisional membership for congregations at variance with denominational positions, a conference of congregations that accept noncelibate homosexuals as members, and allowing congregations to choose membership in either an area conference or the denomination but not necessarily both.

The CLC will need to develop a consensus by the end of the group's next meeting, scheduled for May 24-25, 2000, in order to allow time for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to process the CLC proposal before it goes to delegates at the 2001 assembly in Nashville, Tenn. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates are expected to then vote on membership as a final step in the transformation of their two groups into Mennonite Church USA.

While many constituents are looking to the CLC for solutions to the membership dilemma, Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect and CLC chair Ervin Stutzman said answers won't come quickly. "We're forming, and that will take some time," he said.

In one session, Stutzman invited participants to state their fears regarding membership and homosexuality. Some people expressed concerns about losing relationships and about church statements being used as a means to discipline churches.

Transformation project director Jim Schrag said he fears the loss of local discernment. Gilberto Flores, representative from AMIGA, the General Conference Mennonite Church Hispanic organization, fears the damage of labeling people. He recalled how, in his native Guatemala, the government labeled people who helped the poor as communists. "Rules never change the morality of people," he said. "Only the Holy Spirit [does]."

Other meeting participants voiced fears of losing faithfulness. Lancaster Conference representative Lindsey Robinson said he became Mennonite because of the church's stand on social righteousness. Now he fears that he will have to leave the church because "we'll walk away from the clear teaching of the Bible," Robinson said.

Franconia Conference representative Phil Bergey said he doesn't feel a part of either group, that he doesn't fear the loss of relationships or faithfulness. Rather, Bergey said, he fears that "our core values of unity and avoiding conflict are tying us into knots."

The council produced two documents during the meeting. One is a distillation of CLC members' hopes and concerns for Mennonite Church USA. Among the hopes were that "a renewed mission identity … bring vision and energy to the church," that the church "model unity in the midst of diversity" and that the church "bring the best of all our traditions to become a stronger, more invitational church."

Concerns included loss of "family feeling," loss of hearing minority voices, loss of support for women in ministry and loss of congregations and conferences unable to endorse the new Mennonite Church USA.

The other document, "Envisioning the Role of the CLC," lists three responsibilities for the group: receiving input from constituents, practicing discernment and giving counsel to the Executive Board. The document goes on to state that the CLC is "not a managerial, governance or decision-making body" and wants to avoid spending undue time on single issues.
—Gordon Houser

What is the CLC? A primer

The Mennonite Church USA's Constituency Leaders Council was created by delegates at St. Louis 99 as a convocation of leaders from the 23 U.S. area conferences and eight other constituent groups, such as the African-American Mennonite Association, Mennonite Indian Leaders Council and Mennonite Women. Total representatives number about 75.

The purpose of the council is to provide opportunity for dialogue and discernment in a forum other than the Executive Board and delelgate assembly.

Last GC workers leave Japan site

For the first time since 1951, there are no General Conference Mennonite Church mission workers on Japan's Kyushu Island, one of the early sites of GC mission work in the country.

After 45 years in Japan, Commission on Overseas Mission workers Peter and Mary Derksen retired to Canada. Their final assignment had been in Fukuoka, the largest city on Kyushu.

"In the early years, people would come to special evangelistic meetings by the hundreds," Mary says. "There would be a full house 10 nights in a row. Now, that wouldn't happen. I think in the early years there was a big empty spot because of [the Japanese people's] disillusionment with the government after the loss in World War II."

The Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions have 10 workers in other locations in Japan.*—GCMC News Service*

Enrollment rises for first time since 1996

Four of the six U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges and seminaries reported having more students this fall than last, breaking a two-year streak of decreasing overall enrollment.

A total of 4,573 full- and part-time students are registered at the six schools this fall, up from last year's 4,553. The number of undergraduates rose from 4,072 to 4,139, while the number of seminary students dipped from 279 to 273 and graduate students dropped from 202 to 161.

The last increase in total enrollment came in 1996 with 4,674 students, the highest figure of the decade.

Showing a 5.1 percent gain, Hesston (Kan.) College had the greatest percentage increase in enrollment and the school's first increase since 1995. Hesston's fall semester tally is 432, compared to 411 last year. Student body numbers were boosted by 257 new students, the most since 1992.

Goshen (Ind.) College's enrollment grew for the fourth consecutive year as the school added 37 students to its enrollment, growing from 1,045 last fall to 1,082, a 3.5 percent gain. The school has 226 first-time freshmen, the third consecutive year that number has topped 220. That hasn't happened since the falls of 1980 through 1982.

Also growing in enrollment was Bluffton (Ohio) College with 1,015 students, compared with 1,001 last year. The number of undergraduate students increased from 982 to 999, but graduate students decreased from 19 to 16.

With an enrollment of 174, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., gained one student over last fall's total.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., continued a three-year slide in enrollment, falling 7.4 percent from last year's 515 students to 477 this semester. But not all the news was bad as the school has 120 new freshmen, up from 105 last fall.

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., posted a total enrollment of 1,393, slipping 1 percent from last year's 1,408. Undergraduate enrollment rose by 30 students (1,119 to 1,149), but decreases were reported in seminary (106 to 99) and other graduate-level programs (183 to 145). The full-time equivalency, however, reached a record 1,240.

Through the years

Total enrollment of the six U.S. Mennonite colleges and seminaries through the 1990s:

- 1990—4,152 students
- 1991—4,191 students
- 1992—4,171 students
- 1993—4,332 students
- 1994—4,343 students
- 1995—4,494 students
- 1996—4,674 students
- 1997—4,625 students
- 1998—4,553 students
- 1999—4,573 students

Mexican Mennonites: Close School of the Americas

WASHINGTON—After hearing and seeing the work of some its graduates, a group of Mexican Mennonites has called for the "definitive closing" of the School of the Americas (SOA), the controversial military training program at Fort Benning, Ga.

Church leaders recently visited Chiapas, which has been occupied by the Mexican military since the 1994 Zapatista uprising. SOA graduates have had leading roles in Mexican military activities in Chiapas. SOA's "teachings and practices are a great violation of the human rights of Latin Americans," say 28 Mexico City pastors and 28 other church members in a statement to the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office.

"The presence of the Mexican army has greatly increased, accompanied by rapes, tortures and killings," the statement says. "The military presence has also fostered the formation of armed 'paramilitary' groups that have spread terror and committed barbarous acts such as the Acteal massacre, in which 48 persons died, mostly women and children.

"We ask that the Christians of the world lift their voices and fulfill their prophetic role of denouncing injustice."

SOA provides training for elite Latin American military officers, many of whom have been linked to human rights abuses in their native countries. The school subsequently has been the focus of increasing protests both in the United States and throughout Latin America.

—Martin Shupack for MCC News Service

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More couples mixing marriage, service

Number of married couples in MVS has doubled

ELKHART, Ind.—New Mennonite Voluntary Service workers Jennifer and Nathan Christophel Lichti bring experience in community living to their seven-member MVS unit in Tucson, Ariz. The Lichtis, after all, have been living as a community of two for about a year.

"Couples can model that [community], and it can transfer to the rest of the house," Jennifer says.

The Lichtis were one of nine couples to go through MVS orientation this summer, bringing the total number of couples in MVS to 14. That means 28 out of MVS's 111 workers are married to other MVS workers—double the number since spring 1998.

As the Lichtis and other MVS couples note, there are similarities between marriage and service. "The whole idea of marriage is being a servant to one another," says Heather Bachman Reichenbach, who, with her husband, Brian, recently started assignments in Sioux Falls, S.D.

The Reichenbachs, 1999 graduates of Bluffton (Ohio) College, hope their MVS experience will set a tone for their marriage. Brian has been accepted to medical school, with its prospects of material security.

"Knowing that Brian will be a doctor and that at some time we will have means, the simple living of MVS serves as a wake-up call to how much we really need to live," Heather says.

Paul and Sarah Lapenta Hebblethwaite joined MVS this summer after dropping out of graduate studies in photography at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind. The two had collaborated on several projects and took courses together, but trying to fit their marriage into their art "was like putting a square peg in a round hole," Paul says.

After months of wrestling with the problem, the Hebblethwaites decided to act on a call to do service together. "It felt like Abraham in Genesis 12," Sarah says. "God was calling us someplace. We didn't know where, but we needed to take that step."

After applying to Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Board of Missions and the Peace Corps, the Hebblethwaites accepted MVS assignments in Fresno, Calif.

The Lichtis entered MVS because of the support they received from Shalom Mennonite Church, their home congregation after moving to Tucson in January. After the Lichtis shared about tensions they were having with their landlord, the congregation, which is also the supporting congregation of the Tucson MVS unit, helped the couple get out of their lease and found them a place to stay.

"We have this feeling that we'll always be in service some way," Nathan says. "So [after that incident] we said, 'Let's do that and have the community around us as well.' "—*Grant E. Rissler for GCMC and MBM news services*

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Poultry project is nest egg for Albanians

But getting the chicks was 'more than bargained for'

KEMISTAJ, Albania—After months of incubation and some scrambling by organizers, an Eastern Mennonite Missions-Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions poultry project has taken wing in Albania, a country at the bottom of Europe's economic pecking order.

Local villagers have received more than 2,000 chicks from Greece as agricultural investments. Families bought as few as five chicks and as many as 300 with the hope that the venture will yield sustainable profits in the coming years.

"Our hope is that these Greek chickens will do well for the local farmers, and that [the farmers] can perhaps adopt better methods of caring for [the chickens]," says EMM worker Will Keener.

The project's start was a memorable one, he says. In August, Keener and Andon, an Albanian co-worker, traveled from Kemistaj to Ioannina, Greece, to pick up the 2,040 baby chickens that had been ordered.

Keener says the trip to Greece to pick up the chicks was "a lot more than we bargained for." Customs and border crossing delays made Keener and Andon five hours late in leaving Greece, threatening the lives of the chicks—in the back of a hot van—and forcing Keener to drive risky Albanian roads at night. "I tried to leave it in God's hands," he says.

Keener and Andon arrived in Lushnje at 9:30 p.m., too late to deliver the famished chicks to their Albanian families. Though Keener's and Andon's homes in Kemistaj were just a 10-minute drive farther, the men's homes would not accommodate the birds overnight. They decided to seek lodging at the home of EMM missionaries Dan and Melike Smeenge in Lushnje.

EMM-VMBM photo by Willard Eberly

While a neighbor boy peers over his shoulder, Dan Smeenge, Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Albania, vaccinates a chick as part of a poultry project sponsored by EMM and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.

With a little creativity and some duct tape, the Smeenges transformed their hallway into an emergency chicken yard. "We got every light in our house and suspended them in the hallway," they said in a written report to EMM headquarters in Salunga, Pa. "We got out our china dishes—nothing but the best for our guests! These little guys were running on empty after a day in a hot car without food or water."

By divine timing, the Smeenges were also hosting physician Wayne Weaver and his wife, Lavina, of Homesville, Ohio, who were in Albania for a short-term assignment with a health clinic. The Weavers were familiar with poultry care through their son's turkey farm in Virginia. "This is where we got the chuckle on God's timing," the Smeenges said.

The Mennonite church planting and development work in Albania is a partnership between EMM and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.—*Kristin Oberholtzer for EMM and VMBM news services*

We got out our china dishes—nothing but the best for our guests!

—Dan and Melike Smeenge

Correction: Zimbabwe, recommended as the site of the next Mennonite World Conference assembly, is home to 25,000 Brethren in Christ. They were misidentified as Mennonites in the Sept. 28 issue.

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Bethel receives largest gift in school history

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—A great-grandson of one of Bethel College's founders has given the school $2.5 million, the largest contribution in the history of the college, as the lead gift for a new $5 million science facility on campus.

Fred Krehbiel and his wife, Kay, of Hinsdale, Ill., made the donation in honor of J.J. and Anna Krehbiel. J.J. Krehbiel helped establish Bethel in 1887 and was board president from 1893 to 1909. Fred Krehbiel is chairman and chief executive officer of Molex Inc. of Lisle, Ill. The company, with plants in 21 countries, makes electronic, electrical and fiber-optic interconnection products, switches and application tooling.

Groundbreaking and construction for the new science facility, to be called Krehbiel Science Center, are scheduled for next year. It is expected to be completed by August 2001.

Former MCC worker jailed in Malaysia

AKRON, Pa.—A former Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker now working as a journalist in Malaysia is serving a six-week term for an article that a judge said offended him.

In January 1997, Murray Hiebert of *Far Eastern Economic Review* wrote about growing litigiousness in Malaysia, citing a lawsuit brought by the judge's wife against a school because their son was dropped from the debate team. Hiebert is reportedly the first journalist to be jailed in Malaysia since the country gained independence in 1957. He started his sentence on Sept. 11.

Hiebert, a Manitoba native, served with MCC from 1973 to 1986 in Vietnam, Laos and Washington. *Far Eastern Economic Review* paid tribute to him in its Sept. 23 issue, calling him "a gentleman who by his disposition and Mennonite upbringing eschews the gruff sometimes found in other equally seasoned reporters."—*MCC News Service*

EMU joins alliance for prepaid tuition plan

HARRISONBURG, Va.—As the cost of college education increases and rates of personal savings decline, Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg has joined a plan to offer prepaid tuition programs.

According to the plan, used by an alliance of 124 private schools in 35 states, families anticipating sending children to college can buy certificates for specific dollar amounts. The percentage of paid tuition established at the time of the certificate purchase is guaranteed, even if tuition rates change before the student enrolls. The certificates are valid at any school in the alliance.

If a student chooses not to attend an alliance school, the certificate money can be withdrawn without penalty. Certificates can also be transferred to other family members.

Choice Books expands into Southwest

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Choice Books coverage has grown as the organization has added a western distributor. Phoenix-based Choice Books of Southwest will be responsible for accounts and displays in Arizona, with the possibility of expansion into other Southwestern states.

Choice Books of Southwest is the eighth regional distributor. Choice Books, headquartered in Harrisonburg, sold nearly 2.4 million books last year.

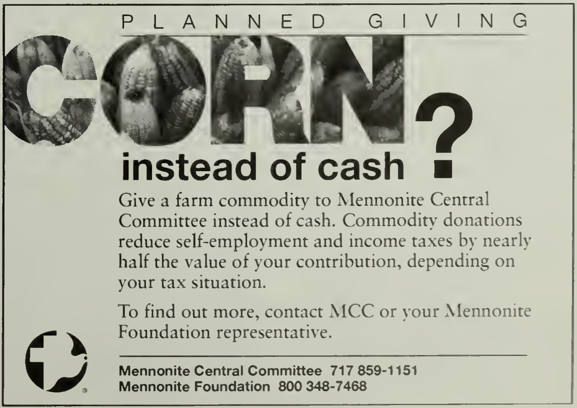
New relief sale raises $54,000

McHENRY, Md.—The first Western Maryland-Pennsylvania Relief Sale on Sept. 18 raised more than $54,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. The event, held at the Garrett County Fairgrounds, included the sale of more than 100 quilts, comforters and wall hangings; storytelling by Peter Dyck; assembling 806 school kits; and more.

Twenty-six sales in the United States and 14 in Canada have been held or are scheduled to be held in 1999.

by the way ...

Mennonite Central Committee is involved with projects in Cuba, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and Sudan, which have all been labeled "rogue countries" by the U.S. government.—*Washington Memo*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Events

Indiana All-Mennonite Women's rally, Oct. 14, Kokomo, Ind. Theme: "Music of Missions." Speakers: Margaret Metzler, Mary Shadowen, Alice Shenk.

Michiana Anabaptist Historians fall meeting, Oct. 23, Goshen, Ind. Subject: "The Plain Peoples of Michiana" by Steven M. Nolt. Contact: 219-533-7819.

"Anabaptism and Business Today" consultation, Nov. 3-4, Norfolk, Va. Sponsored by Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Mennonite Mutual Aid. Contact: 800-665-7026 or nas@meda.org.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region III annual meeting, Nov. 5-6, Roach, Mo.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region IV annual meeting, Nov. 6, Phoenix

"Pastoring Polarities: Leading Congregations Through Sticky Situations" conference, Nov. 9-10, Elkhart, Ind. Sponsored by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Leader: Marcus Smucker. Contact: 219-296-6222 or dzaerr@ambs.edu.

Workers

Bast, Katrina, Woodville, N.Y., is beginning a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) in Kansas City, Kan.

Beachy, Benjamin, Fleetwood, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Alamosa, Colo.

Bernhart, Susan, Rochester, N.Y., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Chicago.

Bock, Colin and Monica, Winnipeg, are beginning two-year assignments with MVS in Tucson, Ariz.

Bontrager, Bethany, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Alamosa, Colo.

Buckwalter, Joseph and Sera, Harrisonburg, Va., are beginning one-year assignments with MVS in Seattle.

Buller, Colleen, West St. Paul, Man., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Wichita, Kan.

Dixon, Susan, Topeka, Kan., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Austin, Texas.

Farris, Heather, Topeka, Kan., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in San Francisco.

Froese, Harry and Mary Ann, Drake, Sask., are beginning two-year assignments with MVS in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Gaab, LiLin, has been appointed director of business development for Mennonite Economic Development Services' North American Services department.

Hansen, Gina, Aurora, Ore., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Dallas.

Johnston, Jim, has resigned a pastorate at Mount Pisgah Mennonite Church, Leonard, Mo.

Kempe, Skip, Milford, N.J., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in New York.

Kennell, Eleanor, Eureka, Ill., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Washington.

Kingsley, Sarah, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Boulder, Colo.

Kliewer, Tim, on Sept. 27 started a pastorate at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

Krehbiel, Kathy Harder and Matt Harder, North Newton, Kan., are beginning one-year assignments with MVS in Richmond, Va.

Lehman, Ben, Orrville, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Seattle.

Leppert, Nancy, Filer, Idaho, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Wichita, Kan.

Lesser, Marvin, Beaumont, Alta., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Wichita, Kan.

Miller, Allison, Kalona, Iowa, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in St. Louis.

Miller, James, Uniontown, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Washington.

Muheim, Silvia, Altdorf, Switzerland, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Austin, Texas.

Musser, Thomas, Fremont, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Seattle.

Nice, Rebecca, Telford, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Boulder, Colo.

O'Brien, Margaret, on Sept. 15 began a pastorate at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Rich, Kirsten, Archbold, Ohio, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Hutchinson, Kan.

Schmidt, Alison, Wichita, Kan., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Austin, Texas.

Schrag, Charlene, was licensed Aug. 15 at Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church as youth pastor.

Simcox, Ben, Pipersville, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Alamosa, Colo.

Sommers, Kathryn, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Washington.

Stoltzfus, Karla, Rileyville, Va., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Topeka, Kan.

Thieszen, Andrea, Henderson, Neb., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Topeka, Kan.

Wagner, Ines, Bad Vilbel, Germany, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Austin, Texas.

Wiens, Judy, Winkler, Man., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS in Hamilton, Ont.

Yoder, Jené and Jerry, Whitewater, Kan., are beginning two-year assignments with MVS in Topeka, Kan.

Zuercher, Joyce, Hesston, Kan., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Births

Addis, Brittaney Anne, Sept. 23, to Curtis and Janine Addis, Mount Hope, Kan.

Allaby, Katherine Grace, Aug. 21, to Gordon and Leslie Allaby, Moundridge, Kan.

Cooper, Michael Eric, Sept. 20, to Chris and Heidi (Thieszen) Cooper, Newton, Kan.

Cripe, Madelynn Elizabeth, Aug. 27, to Katy (Fergusson) and Mark Cripe, Aurora, Ill.

Friesen, Tatiana Reann, Sept. 10, to Bonnie (Carlisle) and Paul Friesen, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Daniel Steven, Sept. 3, to David and Shari (Bollinger) Graber, Goshen, Ind.

Henschen, Cade Gene, Aug. 18, to Kris (Weaver) and Robert Henschen, Wakarusa, Ind.

Kennedy, Tanner Alan, July 21, to Ken and Kim (Hatter) Kennedy, McGayheysville, Va.

Miller, Savannah Grace, Aug. 24, to Bitsy (Fries) and Victor Miller, Chesapeake, Va.

Morris, John Augustus, Aug. 15, to John and Lisa Morris, Austin, Texas.

Romig, Caleb Allen, Aug. 18, to Fawn and James Romig, Salina, Kan.

Smith, Ian Joseph, Aug. 2, to Bobby and Lynelle (Weaver) Smith, Lebanon, Pa.

Steiner, Kristin Joy, Sept. 18, to Karen (Steiner) and Kevin Steiner, Indianapolis, Ind.

Stoltzfus, Tanner Isaac, Sept. 9, to James and Verna (Burkholder) Stoltzfus, Lewisburg, Pa.

Marriages

Amstutz/Goering: Tara Renae Amstutz, Pulaski, Iowa, and Kevin Jacob Goering, Newton, Kan., Sept. 18.

Balsley/Butts: Brian Balsley, Elkhart, Ind., and Janna Butts, Elkhart, Aug. 28 at First United Methodist Church, Goshen, Ind.

Boehm/Plett: Maria Boehm, Winnipeg, and Tim Plett, Winnipeg, Aug. 7 at Fort Garry Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Choate/Miller: Heather Ann Choate, Sarasota, Fla., and Jason Allen Miller, Sarasota, Sept. 11 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Freed/Pfautz: Jonathan Freed, Lebanon, Pa., and Markay Pfautz, Newmanstown, Pa., Aug. 28 at Lancaster, Pa.

Graber/Hartman: Toni Graber, Elkhart, Ind., and Monte Hartman, Elkhart, Sept. 19 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Hoover/Keller: Valerie Hoover, Annville, Pa., and Justin Keller, Annville, Sept. 19 at Midway Church of the Brethren, Lebanon, Pa.

Kiser/Riley: Kylene Kiser, Stuarts Draft, Va., and Matthew Riley, Charlottesville, Va., Aug. 14 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

Simones/Sommer: Joe Simones, St. Louis, and Heidi Sommer, Pandora, Ohio, Sept. 18 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Deaths

Bishop, Willis, 94, Telford, Pa., died Sept. 17. Survivors: son Richard; three grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Glick, Amy Kreider, 96, Minot, N.D., died Aug. 12. Spouse: Andrew Glick (deceased). Parents: John and Hettie Buckwalter Kreider (deceased). Survivors: children Elizabeth Grandfield, Margaret Metzler, Oren, John, Lydia Samatar, Ervie; 23 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Surrey Church of the Brethren, Surrey, N.D.

Grundman, Margaret, 77, Moundridge, Kan., died Sept. 9. Spouse: Milton Grundman. Other survivors: children Marlene Klassen, Michael; two grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 13 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Hochstetler, Emil, 72, Middlebury, Ind., died Aug. 27 of injuries from a truck accident. Spouse: Fannie Bontrager Hochstetler. Parents: Perry and Penola Boley Hochstetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Elaine Strauser, Cheryl, Carolyn Neumeyer, Gordon; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Jantz, Anna Reimer Classen, 78, Hesston, Kan., died Sept. 18. Spouse: Clyde Jantz (deceased). Parents: John and Mary Friesen Reimer (deceased). Survivors: children Irene Armstrong, Ruth Ebersole, Anna Joy Troyer, Wilma Miller; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; stepchildren: Clydene Gingerich, Lou Ann Eichelberger, Darrell Jantz; six step-grandchildren; 11 step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 21 at Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Johnson, Esther Helen, 79, Moundridge, Kan., died Sept. 7. Funeral: Sept. 10 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

Landis, Betty Musselman, 76, Telford, Pa., died Sept. 15. Spouse: Heber Landis (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Elizabeth Moyer Musselman (deceased). Survivors: children Deborah Godshall, Michael; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, Laura, 85, Sarasota, Fla., died Sept. 15 of heart complications. Spouse: Omar Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Karen Basinger, Mary, Richard, Allen; 11 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Miller, James, 38, Davis, Calif., died Sept. 11 from a climbing accident. Parents: Robert (deceased) and Jean Carper Miller. Memorial service: Oct. 10 at Reba Place Fellowship, Evanston, Ill.

Minnich, Marlin, 45, Bainbridge, Pa., died Sept. 1 from a truck accident. Spouse: Jean Minnich. Other survivors: children Michael, Christine. Funeral: Sept. 6 at Bossler Mennonite Church, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Neer, Dwight, 82, West Liberty, Ohio, died Sept. 12. Spouse: Ida Lapp Neer. Parents: Earl and Edna Neer (deceased). Other survivors: children Philip, Richard, Grace Leichty, Lois Coons; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

Petersheim, Mary Yoder, 82, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Sam Petersheim (deceased). Parents: John and Edna Yoder Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Edna Wallace, Betty Garvin, Cletus Petersen, Arlene Julien, Anna Marie Sylvester, Earl; 15 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; nine step-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Reimer, Joel, 75, Buhler, Kan., died Sept. 8. Spouse: Laurene Reimer. Parents: George and Agatha Ediger Reimer (deceased). Other survivors: children Suzanne Wedel, Mike, Barb Lukert, Sandy Hayden, Jeff; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 11 at Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler.

Roth, Melinda Iutzi, 92, Tavistock, Ont., died Aug. 28. Spouse: Aaron Roth (deceased). Parents: Christian and Magalena Iutzi (deceased). Survivors: children Lyle, Clair, Ronald; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at Tavistock.

Troyer, Mary Louise McCleary, 75, Elida, Ohio, died July 31 of cancer. Spouse: Robert Troyer. Parents: Elic and Laura Fox McCleary (deceased). Other survivors: children Stevan, Linda Showalter, Becky Kephart; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Pike Mennonite Church, Elida.

Voth, Elnora Weaver, 67, Fayetteville, Ark., died Sept. 17. Spouse: Donald Voth. Parents: Norman and Mabel Weldy Weaver (deceased). Other survivors: children Thomas, Michael. Memorial service: Sept. 23 at Trinity United Methodist Church, Fayetteville, Ark.

Witmer, Kenneth Diller, 68, Lavale, Md., died Sept. 5 of a heart attack. Spouse: Patricia Spessard Witmer. Parents: Raymond and Mary Diller Witmer (deceased). Other survivors: children Sondra Giniewski, Donna Gervason, Diane, Laurie Hartung, Kenneth Jr., Jerri; 16 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at Lavale United Methodist Church.

Yoder, Jean Margaret Martin, 90, Bluffton, Ohio, died Sept. 5. Spouse: Harry Yoder. Parents: Alexander and Edith Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Edith, Ronald, Laura Yoder Gliga; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 11 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Correction: Elta Metzler Harnish, wife of Jacob Harnish, is not deceased, as reported in the Sept. 28 issue.

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- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education,*** part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526, 219-533-1922

- **Menno House,** live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager,*** individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2000. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970

- **First Mennonite Church,** Berne, Ind., seeks a ***director of Christian education.*** The position will be full-time. Send resume by Nov. 15, 1999. To inquire further for job description, contact First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108

- **Drift Creek Camp** seeks ***caretaker,*** a position for married couple beginning Jan. 1, 2000. Responsible for hosting, cleaning and maintenance. Salary, medical insurance, housing, utilities and some meals provided. Contact Ron Sears, Drift Creek Camp, P.O. Box 1110, Lincoln City, OR 97367; 541-996-3978

- **Wellman Mennonite Church,** Wellman, Iowa, seeks a full-time ***pastor.*** Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. To inquire further or send resume, contact Wellman Mennonite Church, 1215 - 8th Ave., P.O. Box 122, Wellman, IA 52356; 319-646-2532; email wellmennonite@juno.com

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities. Location: East Petersburg or Millersville, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time community living adviser positions available in various group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466, ext. 102

- **Menno Haven Inc. Retirement Community** seeks a ***director of gift planning.*** Responsibilities will include setting organizational fund-raising goals, planning and implementing fund-raising activities, and cultivating relationships with prospective donors. Prefer candidate with at least 3 years fund-raising experience, a bachelor's degree, good communication and relationship-building skills, and an understanding of Mennonite faith.

  Send cover letter with salary requirements and resume to Human Resources, Menno Haven Inc., 1427 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201, email CBumbaugh@mennohaven.org. EOE

- **Calvary Mennonite Church,** Aurora, Ore., located in a farming community, is seeking a ***senior pastor*** who is a people person, is Spirit-filled, relates well with youth and is open to ministering in spiritual gifts. We are a congregation of professional, semiprofessional and farming people. The senior pastor will work with an associate pastor and an administrative secretary. Our facilities include a new large gymnasium, Sunday school classrooms and 300-capacity beautiful sanctuary—all debt-free. We have a fully operating preschool ministry. Regular attendance is 145-175.

  Contact search committee chair: elder John Colvin, 503-266-1636

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) has an opening for an ***actuarial student*** responsible for assisting with individual health actuarial functions (calculating reserves, developing premiums, rating and quoting). Requires bachelor's degree in math, business, finance or a related field with background in calculus, algebra, probability and statistics; self-motivation; strong communication skills; knowledge of spreadsheet and database software. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest along with resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking a ***fraternal adviser*** for the southeast and north central states. The office will be in Goshen, Ind. This person will serve as a regional resource person and communication link with congregations, assisting them in using MMA's fraternal programs and accessing other MMA services. Qualified candidates will have strong leadership skills, ability to motivate others, good communication and public speaking skills, an understanding of local church structures, and a willingness to travel. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest along with resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***communications director and creative manager,*** a seasoned marketing communication professional to guide our work in advertising, promotion, PR and corporate positioning. Must have strong creative management skills and the ability to strategically plan, organize and bring out the very best in creative people. Bachelor's degree in communications or marketing, professional background including sales promotion, public relations and/or advertising, two to four years of experience in managing creative development, and knowledge of Mennonite and related Anabaptist churches are required. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest along with resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264

- **Archbold Buckeye** seeks full-time ***general assignment reporter-photographer*** for award-winning community weekly newspaper, located in the Mennonite community of Archbold, Ohio. Job includes a variety of reporting responsibilities including hard news and features, some rewrites (sports), lots of community, school, church news and some special projects. Full benefits, medical paid by the company and 401K, salary commensurate with experience. All new iMac computers, beautiful office, great working conditions and congenial co-workers.

  Send resume, Social Security number, references, salary history, grade transcript, clippings to Archbold Buckeye, Attn. Sharon Taylor, 207 N. Defiance St., Archbold, OH 43502

- **Norma Mennonite Church,** a small southern New Jersey congregation comprised of families and singles of diverse backgrounds, seeks ***pastor.*** Position open October 1999. Please send resume to Norma Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 313, Norma, NJ 08347. For more information, contact Everett Buckwalter, email EB1322@juno.com

- **The Lion & the Lamb Peace Arts Center,** at Bluffton College, seeks ***director:*** 12-month, half-time position, possibly leading to full-time, directing creative education center which promotes peace and international understanding through the arts and literature for children. Responsibilities: directing all aspects of the center, including educational programming for children and adults and maintenance of substantial literature and art collections. Qualifications: commitment to peace education, creative vision, entrepreneurial/management skills. Master's degree in education or peace studies preferred. Position opens Jan. 1, 2000. Consideration of applications begins immediately.

  Send application letter, resume and three letters of reference to President's Office, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817. For additional information see www.bluffton.edu. EOE

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following:

  Faculty position in American history: Full-time, continuing faculty position. Ph.D. required. Competence: United States history, some area studies and political science.

  Women's field hockey coach: Lead NCAA Division III nationally ranked team.

  Appointments fall 2000. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin Dec. 1, 1999. AAEO employer

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by Gordon Houser

With the omnipresence of television, the computer, video games and a dozen other distractions, the reading of books seems to be a dying practice. And many Christians who read lean toward either nonfiction books or what is often labeled "Christian fiction." Few read serious, literary fiction.

I have sympathy for those who pick up a book with the desire to escape. I enjoy an occasional foray into certain genres of fiction (such as mysteries). I also enjoy an occasional hamburger. But junk food does not make for a nutritional diet. Neither does junk reading.

In his book *Of Fiction and Faith* (Eerdmans, 1997), W. Dale Brown quotes Franz Kafka: "If the book we are reading does not wake us, as with a fist hammering on our skulls, why then do we read it? ... A book must be an ice-ax to break the sea frozen inside us."

This will appear extreme to many, as Kafka appears extreme to many. The point is that good fiction will change us, deepen our experience of life and lead us to new insights into God's truth. Unlike nonfiction, fiction does this indirectly, not with propositional statements but by taking us into another world, into characters' experiences of the world, through which we may find help in breaking that frozen sea within us.

William H. Willimon writes in *Reading With Deeper Eyes: The Love of Literature and the Life of Faith* (Upper Room Books, 1998): "Through another's art we get to try on another's being, get to look at the world through another's eyes, which aids our moral imagination, which leads to good." Seeing through another's eyes does not mean we agree with everything that person (character) does. But we come to a deeper understanding of that person's humanity, and thus of all humanity, of God's world.

Though by definition untrue, fiction is a means to arrive at truths we may miss otherwise, since truth is not limited to reason but includes our emotions. "Good art," writes Willimon, "is an effort to render the world truthfully, to bring to speech that which is often left unspoken because it is too painful, or too wonderful, or too beyond the range of most of our pitiful powers of description."

In his book, Brown talks with 12 American writers who are Christian. All resist the term "Christian writer" because it implies a kind of writing that is didactic, that tries to preach rather than tell a story. Garrison Keillor is especially critical of the term: " 'Christian fiction' is a terrible term. Christian bookstores are, in my experience, a warehouse of horrendous art and dismal writing and really dreary music. I wouldn't go in one on a bet."

Good fiction is universal. This does not mean that it tries to appeal to everyone but that it addresses themes that apply to everyone. Willimon looks at 10 works that address themes that carry a certain moral weight. For example, in a discussion of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Willimon writes: "New life, forgiveness, redemption and a fresh start are offered to all, but not without cost, not without the ordeal of patience and suffering."

Too often we want books merely to entertain us or to give us easy answers, simple solutions. One of the appeals of murder mysteries is that they usually offer a solution that ties up all the details (see "Murder Most Foul," Aug. 31, page 6). But life is not like that. And we do not confront the truth of God's presence in the world by denying the reality of life.

Fiction often appeals to experience. While novels of ideas exist, their ideas arise out of life situations that involve more than thought. Robert Olen Butler calls fiction "the art form of human yearning." It often addresses some longing within us.

Let me close this appeal to read literary fiction by quoting Flannery O'Connor: "People without hope not only don't write novels, but what is more to the point, they don't read them. They don't take long looks at anything, because they lack the courage. The way to despair is to refuse to have any kind of experience, and the novel, of course, is a way to have experience."

Below is my pick of 10 works of fiction that explore themes of interest to Christians. The list is limited and omits many fine works. I encourage you to make your own list.

Top 10 fictional works this century with Christian themes (in alphabetical order):

1. *The Centaur* by John Updike
2. *Collected Stories* by Flannery O'Connor
3. *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton
4. *The Diary of a Country Priest* by Georges Bernanos
5. *Godric* by Frederick Buechner
6. *Mariette in Ecstasy* by Ron Hansen
7. *Morte D-Urban* by J.F. Powers
8. *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving
9. *The Power and the Glory* by Graham Greene
10. *Silence* by Shusaku Endo

films

Amid a raft of scary movies, one of the best is *The Sixth Sense* (PG-13), a psychological thriller in which a young boy (Haley Joel Osment, who deserves an Oscar nomination) is plagued by ghosts of people who've suffered tragic deaths. Bruce Willis plays the child psychologist who tries to help him. The film raises moral questions about coming to terms with our lives and what we value. It also includes a shocker of an ending.

In *My Son the Fanatic* (R), the generational tables are turned. Om Puri plays a Pakistani taxi driver in northern England whose son becomes increasingly extremist in his Islamic faith. This clashes with the father's friendship with a prostitute (Rachel Griffiths) when the son joins a campaign to clean up the town. This is a rough but moving film. Not for everyone.

art

Responses to the Holy is a biennial exhibition established to stimulate the creation of Jewish and Christian art and provide a place where artists can express their faith journey through biblical, liturgical and personal expression. Professional artists 18 and older may submit artwork in a variety of media. For information, contact C. Carol Cole, Fourth Presbyterian Church, 126 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, IL 60611-2064.

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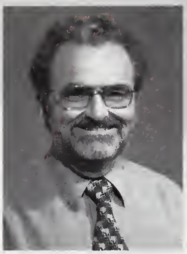

J. Lorne Peachey

Learning to be a good wait-er

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.—Psalm 27:14 (KJV)

It was during yet another hospital visit that I saw this woman pacing outside the main entrance. "What are you doing out here?" an acquaintance asked as the wind blew cigarette smoke toward a clear sky on the first day that felt like fall. "My husband's in there for an EKG," the woman said. "I'm not a good wait-er."

After more than 15 visits to doctors' offices and hospital waiting rooms during the past two months, I understand that woman. While Emily, my wife, has been undergoing tests and procedures related to rheumatoid arthritis and Sjögren's Syndrome, plus spots on her lungs which have proved to be cancerous, I have learned that I hate to wait.

The worst was six hours, the time it took for one surgeon to keep his appointment. The scariest was when I got lost in a hospital's 12-storied labyrinth for three hours, and no one could find me after Emily came out of surgery.

How does one wait? I was determined to redeem the hours by reading; in the past two months I managed to finish five books, ranging from Susan Howatch's *Mystical Paths* to Albert Keim's biography *Harold S. Bender*. However, reading is not how the majority of family members wait for surgeons, X-ray technicians or IV teams to complete their work. In four hospitals and five doctors' offices, I saw only one other person reading a book. One teacher was grading papers. The rest either talked or napped—and, of course, watched the only consistent thing I found in all waiting rooms: TV—always on, always loud!

Control and finiteness—perhaps these are the reasons the Bible puts so much emphasis on waiting.

(I succumbed only once. That was the day Sally Jessy Raphael staged two weddings, in both of which couples were torn apart, literally, by angry mothers out to stop the nuptials. Americana at its worst.)

Why is waiting so difficult? As one whose life revolves around schedules and deadlines, I must admit how hooked I am on my datebook. But it didn't work in the hospital. Here I was at the mercy of doctors and other medical personnel. I was no longer in control. To give up control to someone else is always difficult, but especially so when the future is uncertain.

My waiting for the past two months has also brought me face to face with the finiteness of human knowledge. I become impatient as specialists and experts try to figure out what is wrong and what is the best treatment. They work by process of elimination, which can be excruciatingly slow to a layperson like me.

Control and finiteness—perhaps these are the reasons the Bible puts so much emphasis on waiting. My New Revised Standard Version concordance lists 35 times in Scripture we are told to wait. Could that be because in waiting we come to realize our own inadequacies and our utter dependence on God?

Yet with waiting comes reward. God will strengthen us. God will give us courage not only to walk but also to run.

That has been true for Emily and me in many ways. God's strength came through discovering that a friend was the chief radiologist in our hospital, and he took the time to explain what was happening and what the future might be. God's strength came through meals our congregation brought us during those first days home after the latest hospitalization. God's strength continues to come through cards and letters and emails assuring us people care and are praying for us.

God's strength will guide us into the future, regardless of what it might be. I find that easy to say but most difficult to live. I want a diagnosis *now.* I want to know what the future will be. I want things to return to normal.

The Bible promises none of these. Instead, it asks me to wait, with this promise:

Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.—Isaiah 40:31 (NRSV)

In the words of the folk song based on this verse I pray: "Teach me, Lord, teach me, Lord, to wait."—*jlp*

the Mennonite

October 19, 1999

Brenda Isaacs (left) and Gayle Gerber Koontz write about their calls to leadership in the Mennonite church.

Mennonite women leaders tell their stories

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9 Imprisoned journalist's saga hits home
9 Property returned to Ethiopian church
10 Injured volunteer returns to Bangladesh
16 A way in the wilderness

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

No limits

Thank you, Gordon Houser, for your editorial "The Scandalous Gospel of Christ" (Sept. 21). Would that we could allow ourselves and each other to be as free as Jesus was and asked us to be. Then perhaps we might have the will and desire to appropriate the Holy Spirit's power to be what Jesus expects of us as depicted in John 14:12: "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these." Because I refuse to be limited by a prescribed belief mold, I have just been denied the opportunity to share my nursing expertise in Russia via a Christian organization. It is very important to me that I not be called to task one day for limiting with rules and traditions those who show an interest in God-honoring fellowship.

I am oft reminded of the admonition of a dear Presbyterian minister in Detroit, Carl Howie, to do all we could to welcome our black neighbors after the 1967 riots. He insisted that unless we embrace those who are different from us and do not require that they be like us, we have become a "club with admission criteria" and not a congregation that worships the Almighty God.—*Erica L. Janzen, Mesa, Ariz.*

The weight of conversation

I found myself deeply troubled by Ervin R. Stutzman's article, "Why Integration? A Biblical Perspective" (Sept. 28). While I appreciated his call for peaceful, loving reconciliation, I found it to be an exceptionally dangerous one.

The crux of Stutzman's article clearly revolves around the presupposition that homosexual activity is sin. While Stutzman's view is no doubt shared by many in our church family, I must confess that I shuddered when I realized that such a divisive opinion on the membership issue appeared in the guise of a "conversation" with Paul. There is extreme danger in putting words into Paul's mouth and proclaiming it in a nationally published magazine as truth, no matter how clearly Stutzman may believe what he is saying. The issue is certainly not as scripturally cut and dried as Stutzman makes it sound, or there would not be as much division as there currently is.

I do not fault Stutzman for stating his opinion on the membership issue. But I do find it somewhat unsettling to see the future moderator of Mennonite Church USA come down so heavily on one side of this division. If the membership issue is to be resolved, as a church family we must acknowledge that differing interpretations of Scripture exist among us and resist the temptation, no matter how strongly we feel otherwise, to proclaim our reading of Paul as the unequivocable end-all. Let Paul speak for himself.—*Dustin T. Miller, Mishawaka, Ind.*

Contributing to a common Easter

Thank you for including the note on the date for a unified Easter celebration ("New Life for Easter?") in the Sept. 28 Wider World. The 1997 consultation between Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic Christians to find a common date for Easter was held in Allepo, Syria, at the Syrian Orthodox Bishopric. What went unmentioned is that the five preliminary drafts of agreement were written on a computer Mennonite Central Committee donated to the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) office at the bishopric. This office coordinated all the youth and Christian education work for the churches in Syria. It was the only computer at the bishopric for the conferees to use. When I was told this story by the MECC staff person in Allepo, he proudly showed me the screen saver on the computer that said, "This computer was donated by Mennonite Central Committee." He also said, "The Mennonites helped bring the church a common Easter."

Having a unified date for Easter is not just an ecumenical whim but a matter of witness for Christians in the Middle East,whose Muslim friends joke with them by saying, "Did Jesus die and rise twice since you celebrate it twice each year?"—*Roy Hange, former Mennonite Central Committee country representative in Syria, Charlottesville, Va.*

Whose definition of church?

Having just had the opportunity to participate in a Damascus Road anti-racism training, a "Tidbit" in the Sept. 28 Wider World caught my eye: "Only 5 percent of all Native Americans are actively involved in a church." Through my work with Mennonite Central Committee, I've had the opportunity to learn to know a bit about Lakota culture. And so I wonder who defines "church." I've learned that Native Americans have much to teach us about spirituality. I am amazed and challenged by the way their spiritual life permeates all of their activities and interactions with other people, creatures and the environment. I have learned that Christian churches were responsible for taking Native children and forcing them into residential schools to become "civilized," cut-

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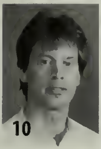

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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readers say

ting their hair, punishing them for speaking their mother tongue and telling them their faith was of the devil. Perhaps that is why many Native people are hesitant to become involved in church as the white, dominant culture defines it.—*Andrea Schrock Wenger, Whitesburg, Ky.*

Hope for healing and hope

Re "Healing and Hope for the Grieving?" (Readers Say, Sept. 21): Please inform the writer that I know from experience that there are, in all probability, more than one in 10 members of that congregation who want to "allow him to grieve publicly" and will support him in any way he wants. We are everywhere, always have been and always will be.

I hesitate to be forward, hopeful that those who need me will ask for what they want. In my experiences I have received support from both gay and straight people. Sometimes the support was asked for and sometimes not. Sometimes it turned out to be positive and sometimes not.

I hope to live to see the day when we have more gay role models who find the courage to live their lives openly.—*David Brenneman, Stuarts Draft, Va.*

Watch your language

It was brought to our attention about the language used in "Retreat Seeks Renewed Peacemaking" in the Aug. 10 issue. It was printed that Michael Banks said: "We could spend all day working at this [statement on international peace issues for St. Louis 99]. But the people don't give a damn about it." We felt this was an inappropriate word to be printed in our Mennonite periodical.—*Freeda Springer, administrative elder, Hopedale Mennonite Church, Hopedale, Ill.*

Cover photos from *She Has Done a Good Thing* (Herald Press, 1999)

God's Smile

The journey of a parent, preacher and poverty fighter

by Brenda Isaacs

For me, the distinction of being a "woman of the cloth" has had as many challenges as rewards. Supposedly we live in an age of enlightenment, but there is still a lot of prejudice against women in ministry.

I came to Christ as a young adult in the African-Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in the late 1960s. This branch of the Methodist church, the oldest black denomination in the United States, was founded by Richard Allen in 1787. He became the first black bishop in America.

Before Allen founded the AME church, the blacks in Philadelphia attended St. George's Methodist Church. But they were not allowed to sit up front or take Communion. Eventually they grew tired of that arrangement and sensed a need to form their own church.

"Mother Bethel" in Philadelphia became the first AME church established by Richard Allen. Charles Wesley, the great Methodist preacher and theologian of England, wrote a book about this church pioneer: *Richard Allen, Apostle of Freedom*.

The AME church has never barred women from the ministry. The first woman preacher I ever heard was an AME—and she was dynamic. Over the years, this church has produced female preachers, pastors, even bishops. It is a pioneer in affirming the ministry of women.

> **I love the Word of God. I love to study, meditate, observe and prepare messages. I'm always a little squeamish when it comes time to deliver the message, sometimes even asking myself, Why did I get involved in this? But once I get started, the Spirit generally flows.**

In my ministerial career with the Mennonite Church, I have been associated with three congregations. The first of these was a Belizean church in Los Angeles, where I first began to preach publicly. The people there loved the gospel so much that they accepted anyone preaching it.

James, my husband, was free in allowing me to preach when the situation called for it or when the people requested it. When we left that church, after serving a four-year term, the women said to me in a public service, "Before you came, we didn't know we were supposed to do anything in church." That was a strong affirmation for my early ministry, something that made me smile.

After a year on sabbatical, we were called to an African-American Mennonite church in Inglewood, Calif. It was also a pleasure to minister there; the people were welcoming and accepting. During that time, I wrote a weekly column for a Christian newspaper. Once a young preacher came up to me and responded to an article I'd written: "I've never seen a woman who can deal with the Scriptures the way you do—most women are too shallow."

I did not know whether to smile or frown. I didn't know if this was a compliment to me or an insult to women in general. Likely it was both.

Ordained in the Mennonite Church: In 1990, I was licensed as a gospel minister in the Southwest Conference (now the Pacific Southwest Conference) and ordained by that same conference in 1992.

In August 1994, our family moved to Elkhart County, Ind. Early in 1995, James and I were called as a team to be interim pastors at Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Elkhart, while the pastor, Gerald Good, was on sabbatical. When we moved there, we never dreamed we would be called to a "white" church, but we were. It became one of our most valuable ministry experiences.

The Sunnyside congregation welcomed our family at a time when we needed acceptance and affirmation. Most of the members there are either professional people (teachers, professors, nurses) or highly skilled in the building trades. They warmed to us and loved us as Christians should—regardless of race, gender or any other variable.

The greatest criticism we had during that whole period was from the Baptist minister of the church across the street. He asked Gerald Good: "Why'd you have to call them? Couldn't you find some white people?"

Gerald told him, "Well, they're Christians, and that's all that matters to us."

I'm still smiling, even laughing, about that exchange.

Two years after the Sunnyside experience, the congregation called me a second time to be interim pastor (alone this time) while they waited for a new pastor from Kansas. Again it was a rich experience.

I love the Word of God. I love to study, meditate, observe and prepare messages. I'm always a little squeamish when it comes time to deliver the message, sometimes even asking myself, Why did I get involved in this? But once I get started, the Spirit generally flows. It's a lot like delivering a baby. Once you're in the delivery room, the baby's going to come whether you want it to or not.

Often I have been blessed by my own messages because I realize they come through me, not from me. For example, I never heard a message on biblical aspects of sexuality until I preached it myself in the early 1990s, when I was past 40. I preached from Leviticus 18, which has all the safe-sex guidelines any generation will ever need. The people were spellbound; they didn't know that kind of information was in the Bible. They referred to this message time and again over the next several years.

Three areas of ministry: Three areas of ministry have stood out in my journey. First, ministering to my own children has always been a priority. During their growing-up years, we had regular Bible studies at home, and I prayed with them every night. I still pray with my remaining child at home, my 15-year-old daughter, Johannah.

I told myself, How can I be out ministering to others if I neglect those who are right in the home with me, those especially assigned to me by God? God has always honored that.

My second area of commitment is preaching the unadulterated Word of God. Sometimes I get into trouble for that because some people don't want to hear it. But I preach it anyway. I like to preach and teach the full gospel; I like to hear the full gospel. I don't like to hear apologies for the Word. I believe people should tell it like it is. I further believe people should do what the Word says.

Finally, I love to minister to the poor. I live for that. In Los Angeles I had ministries on Skid Row, in hospitals, in nursing homes. Nobody paid me specifically for these ministries. But God called me to them, and God paid me—handsomely.

One evening my husband and I had gone to conduct a service at one of the local missions. We had also brought food to serve after the ministry. When we walked into the mission, I laid my beautiful, black velvet coat down in the lobby, then proceeded to take some trays into the fellowship area. A few minutes later, I came back to the lobby to collect my coat, but it was gone. Nobody claimed to have seen it.

I was a little perturbed, but then I consoled myself. Somebody here needed the coat more than I did. Several weeks later I received a postcard in the mail saying I'd won a fur coat and that I could schedule an appointment to pick it up at a certain location. That was a complete surprise to me because I had not entered any contests, raffles or anything of the sort.

From *She Has Done a Good Thing*

Preaching and teaching the full gospel: Brenda Isaacs

We decided to check it out. Sure enough, I received a beautiful, black fur coat that was much more luxurious than the one I'd lost at the mission a few weeks before. I summed it up as God's never-failing providence. The Lord always provides for those earnestly seeking to serve him.

Many times I've had similar experiences. Though we should not primarily be seeking the world's goods, these things are created for our use. Certainly God wants his children to have the best of things.

God's smile: The most important role model in my ministerial life has been Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the most awesome saint of our time. It doesn't matter how long her church filibusters about making her a saint—she was and is one. She lived as a saint, ministered as a saint and died as a saint.

Mother Teresa loved Jesus with her whole heart, and she served God with her entire being. I read something in one of her books that has become the daily motto for my ministry and my life:

> *At the end of life we will not be judged by*
> *how many diplomas we have received,*
> *how much money we have made,*
> *how many great things we have done.*
>
> *We will be judged by*
> *"I was hungry and you gave me food to eat,*
> *I was naked and you clothed me,*
> *I was homeless and you took me in."*

I meditate on the powerful little nun's exhortation, letting it shape my character. And I pray that when my work is evaluated, God will smile.

I told myself, How can I be out ministering to others if I neglect those who are right in the home with me, those especially assigned to me by God? God has always honored that.

Brenda Isaacs is executive director of Church Community Services in Elkhart, Ind. This article is reprinted by permission from the book She Has Done a Good Thing, *edited by Mary Swartley and Rhoda Keener (Herald Press, 1999). All rights reserved.*

From a distance

The ongoing rhythm of call and response, encouragement and risk

by Gayle Gerber Koontz

An enormous painting by Chuck Close hangs in a hall at the Chicago Art Institute. As I walk down the corridor and pass close to the painting, the canvas appears to be covered with random dots and swirls of color. But when I back away from the painting and stand across the hall, the fragments of paint melt into an incredibly detailed, almost photographic image of a man's face.

Living my life year by year, close to the canvas, I see only random dots and swirls—places bright with color, places devoid of color, flowing into one another, lacking pattern, direction.

As a child, then a student in high school and college, I thought of being a high school teacher or a missionary. I did not dream of being an information services director for a church agency. As a married woman working in a church agency and a graduate student in my 20s, I never imagined myself growing into a seminary professor. As a doctoral student, a college faculty member and a seminary professor in my 30s and early 40s, I did not consider myself being prepared for a major administrative role in theological education.

However, when I step back and look from some distance at the fragments of my life, I see an ongoing rhythm of call and response, encouragement and risk, affirmation and growing confidence, dead ends and new choices, failure and forgiveness—small steps each, small brush strokes that in some larger picture, beyond my view, were connected.

God, whose providence and artistry still confound me, layered stroke on stroke, loving me, calling me, redeeming me beyond what I was toward someone other than I imagined.

I was a born to a General Conference Mennonite Church family in a small Ohio town in the mid-1940s. So what brought me to the point where, even though I am a woman, I can say, "I am a seminary professor" or, "I am a theologian and a dean"?

The strength and ability to lead in the church has been a gift granted me and nurtured by others: family and congregations, church colleges, camps and conferences, artists and teachers and church leaders.

The strength and ability to lead in the church has been a gift granted me and nurtured by others: family and congregations, church colleges, camps and conferences, artists and teachers and church leaders.

Religious inclinations nurtured, questions welcomed: I grew up in a home where I was loved and valued, respected and forgiven. With this gift of original blessing, it was not difficult for me to trust that I was also loved and valued by God. I learned to see the amazing creation in which I lived as God's artistry. My father saw the world with the eyes of a photographer—the color and texture of flowers and bread, the beauty of weathered faces and trees, the play of light on water.

As a small child, I remember waking at night during a crashing thunderstorm, fearful, running to my parents. My father took my hand and led me out to the front porch, enclosed on three sides with windows. As lightning flashed and thunder cracked, he held me safe as we watched the storm spend itself.

My father reinterpreted what I observed. He talked about the beauty of God's lightning and how God created storms to water the earth. My fear turned into respect for God's creation and curiosity about it. Through such experience and reinterpretation, repeated again and again in relation to a variety of fears and questions, my trust in God grew.

My mother read to me—Bible stories and many other stories and books. I learned to love reading. Through stories, I learned to notice human frailty and foibles, to laugh at myself and to understand those who are different. I learned about the ravages of human sin, the re-creating work of forgiving love and the power of courageous hope.

I saw, watching and listening to my parents, how Christian faith made a difference in their lives. As a conscientious objector in World War II, my father worked in a mental hospital; my mother joined him there. Their stories opened my eyes to the way American society dealt with the mentally disabled at that time. Their example encouraged me to interpret as normal and good the actions of a man and woman who chose to follow a culture of peace rather than a culture of war.

I listened to my parents struggle with ethical issues they faced in their small photography business: Should they forgive unpaid bills? Should they change their policy and agree to take pictures during wedding services?

Often I observed them relating to our congregation. My father expressed ambivalence with tears at one family meal. He was not sure if he should be part of a service of prayer and healing at the home of a seriously ill member of the congregation. He didn't know if his faith was strong enough.

However, my parents were not comfortable with the religious questions I entertained as an adolescent. During one extended family meal, practicing the virtue of honesty but lacking in political sensitivity, I declared that I didn't believe in heaven and hell.

My mother said, "Don't you ever say that again. If you think like that, I'll feel like I've been a total failure as a parent." I did not discuss heaven and hell with my mother again.

But I did find space in the wider church to follow my questions honestly. The youth group and pastor at First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio, permitted this. Through three summer voluntary service assignments and in courses at Bluffton College, I met a number of serious, articulate, good-humored Christians not threatened by religious questions.

We discussed war and peace, racism, abortion, agnosticism, suffering and death, and the meaning of Christian community. I was given mentors able to ask me fruitful questions and offer insights that deepened my understanding. Such dialogue allowed my faith in the saving power of Jesus Christ to live and grow.

Through this process, I came to feel that honestly following one's deepest questions about the meaning of life can lead to stronger rather than weaker faith in God. I was drawn into an ongoing theological journey that eventually included spending years of my time and energy in graduate school. On this journey I considered in detail some broad questions.

What is good and right and true for us as human beings here in this time and place? What do we know about these through Jesus Christ? What does it mean for our life together in the church and in the world? I listened particularly to the different ways Mennonite theologians responded to these questions.

By 1969 I was also asking, What is good and right and true for me as a Christian woman here in this time and place? I began the arduous task of re-examining Christian faith with the painful question in hand: What is God saying to us as women through this Scripture, in this Christian church?

Once again I was drawn into space hospitable to honest questions, first within other-than-Mennonite theological communities, and later within the Mennonite church itself. In time I found ways to stand with integrity and love as a Mennonite Christian woman before God in the midst of the church.

Encouraged to develop leadership skills: I was offered opportunities for writing, speaking in public, working in committees, listening and negotiating, problem solving and creative thinking. Perhaps most important were the gifts of expectation and trust—expectation that I could do things I was afraid to do, trust that I would make good decisions.

I am reluctant to initiate—actions, projects, even phone calls. I do not like to put myself forward. I fear being presumptuous. I want to be liked. I do not want to fail.

I received encouragement by members of my original congregation, as well as by many teachers and members of the wider church.

I still remember the editor of the *Bluffton News* who read an article I had written as a high school student for a church paper, then sent me an encouraging note to keep writing.

I recall a church member I respected who, after hearing a speech I gave on campus as a college student, said it was an outstanding presentation. That inspired me to try again.

I remember the time a leader for a church-sponsored high school work camp handed me the key to a VW bug and expected me (with license but little driving experience) to be able to figure out how to drive this strange car.

Such small expressions at formative times in my life built my confidence to try again, to continue to risk, to develop my talents for leadership rather than hiding them quietly.

Of special import was an invitation to join a yearlong voluntary service project after my junior year in college. Five of us students traveled and worked with youth and youth sponsors in selected Mennonite congregations. We had unending opportunities to learn about leadership dynamics and skills the hard way and the best way—through practice.

Later I was expected to help teach seminary students during my doctoral study. I was surprised to find myself in this unanticipated role and surprised to find myself thinking at the end of the semester, I can imagine being a seminary professor.

Examples of Christian leadership I could embrace: This gift from the church saved me from cynicism about leadership. From counselors at our church camp in Michigan to Martin Luther King Jr., I saw effective leadership at work in many situations. I saw leaders who were persuasive, respectful and compassionate.

While the Mennonite church gave me numerous positive examples of leadership, few of them were women. As a youth, I didn't know any women serving as pastors, congregational chairs, college religion teachers, seminary professors or heads of church agencies, schools or conferences.

I am grateful for the models of women in leadership I did encounter. I remember Anna Juhnke, one of my professors at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. She combined profound Christian faith and incisive intellectual ability while attending to both a professional career and family life. She modeled receptivity, not only to new ideas but to a transformed spirit before God and others.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen, a friend and colleague in the church for many years, modeled creative problem solving and offered trustworthy counsel as we worked together in seminary administration.

From a distance: Dots and swirls of color as well as empty spaces mark the canvases of our lives. Whether up close or at a distance, we Christians interpret these mysteries in faith, looking for a pattern, the Artist at work.

From She Has Done a Good Thing

Gayle Gerber Koontz

I came to feel that honestly following one's deepest questions about the meaning of life can lead to stronger rather than weaker faith in God.

Gayle Gerber Koontz is professor of theology and ethics at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. This article is reprinted by permission from the book She Has Done a Good Thing, *edited by Mary Swartley and Rhoda Keener (Herald Press, 1999). All rights reserved.*

Small-town service, big-time needs

MVS finds unique opportunities in La Jara, Colo.

LA JARA, Colo.—Living in a small town can take some getting used to. And for Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS), La Jara, with a population of about 800, is about as small as it gets.

"Some years back, a young MVS recruit got off the bus and almost got right back on when he discovered there was no McDonald's in La Jara," says Alice Price, local program coordinator for the La Jara MVS unit.

McDonald's can be found in other places with MVS units, such as Chicago, San Francisco and Austin, Texas. But some workers find rural southern Colorado more to their liking.

"People out here are real," says Ben Simcox from Pipersville, Pa., one of five members in the La Jara unit. "They're not so concerned with making deadlines. It's not competitive or trendy."

But along with the laid-back lifestyle and the beauty of the mountain-enclosed San Luis Valley are great needs. Conejos and Costilla, two of six counties in the 8,000-square-mile valley, are among the poorest in the nation. The area is home to a sizable group of Guatemalan families who work on a large mushroom farm and to migrant workers from Mexico and across the United States.

"There is a trend among Mennonites to move to the city," says MVS associate director Saul Murcia. "But there is life and challenges in rural America, too."

Economic realities: Kendra Miller, serving as a nurse in Conejos County Hospital in La Jara, almost left six months into her assignment, when there were layoffs at the hospital, so she would not take a job from someone who needed it.

"So many of the people hold two jobs," says Miller, a native of Versailles, Mo. "Eleven out of 19 RNs and LPNs have other jobs besides this one."

MVS worker Michelle Whitley from Akron, Pa., has been helping develop a new microloan program for entrepreneurs who can't get regular bank loans, perhaps because of credit history or lack of collateral. They are frequently women and from minority groups.

"[Loan recipients] have had to work through a lot themselves, … and they need this one thing [capital] to give them a boost," Whitley says. "The default rate in microlending is excellent—it's very low."

One of the first loans went to a woman who, with her son, collects wood from a national forest, processes it and sells it to a home decorations factory in Connecticut.

While helping others, unit members have found that a small setting can also mean great opportunities for themselves. Miller came to the 14-bed Conejos County Hospital after graduating with a nursing degree from Goshen (Ind.) College. Before long she became a charge nurse.

"It was astounding," says Miller. "I came straight from school, and four months later they're asking me to be charge nurse. I thought, 'Yeah, right, I don't know anything.' "

Peace in the valley: It was the hospital that first brought Mennonites to the San Luis Valley more than 30 years ago. After building the hospital in the early 1960s, Conejos County turned to Mennonite Board of Missions to run it. MBM was already administering hospitals in La Junta and Walsenberg, Colo.

"The community is about half Hispanic and half Anglo," says Price, a lawyer who works full-time in mediation. "They are distinctive, often polarized groups, and to have one group or the other running the hospital would likely have split the community."

Over the years, more Mennonites moved to La Jara, many of them health professionals to work at the hospital. But a Mennonite congregation was never planted. Instead, they attended a Presbyterian congregation that eventually became a "United Church," both Mennonite and Presbyterian. The group started the MVS unit in the early 1980s.

Price, who grew up Episcopal, became affiliated with the Mennonites in 1979, after she married Andy Zaugg, who had been in La Jara for two years and had ties to the United Church. The family was in Akron, Pa., from 1988 to 1992, when Price served with Mennonite Conciliation Service, then moved back to La Jara.

"Mennonites have built important bridges for community building in and around La Jara," Price says. "But in turn, La Jara has been a place of welcome and rich experience for the many of us who have lived here over the years."*—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Golf shot highlights benefit tournament

Participating in a golf tournament to benefit two Mennonite schools has improved Scott Parker's drive.

Not his drive on the golf course, but his drive on streets and roads. The Springfield, Ore., man won a 2000 Dodge Dakota pickup by hitting a hole-in-one at the Sept. 18 fund-raising tournament for Hesston (Kan.) College and Western Mennonite School, Salem, Ore.

Parker, who didn't attend either school, aced the sixth hole using a seven iron. The tournament was held at the Salem Golf Club.

The pickup was donated by Hershberger Motors of Salem. Dealer Ward Hershberger is a 1957 graduate of Western.

About 120 golfers participated in the tournament, which grossed about $13,000, to be split between Hesston and Western. This was the second consecutive year that the two schools have held a joint benefit golf tournament.

Imprisoned journalist's saga hits home

Goshen student started first year as father started sentence

GOSHEN, Ind.—It's not the way Goshen College student Ann Hiebert would have liked to have started her college experience, her father being whisked off to prison just days into her freshman year.

But by the time mid-term break rolled around, Ann's father had been released by his Malaysian jailers, concluding a saga that had captured the attention of President Clinton and Amnesty International.

Murray Hiebert, a Goshen alumnus and now Malaysia bureau chief for *Far Eastern Economic Review,* was imprisoned Sept. 11 after a two-year legal battle over an article he had written on the growing number of frivolous lawsuits in Malaysia. But he was released on Oct. 11, two weeks earlier than expected, due to good behavior.

It was a difficult time for Ann, who had lived the past four years with her family in Malaysia. "I had all of my freshmen friends on the [dormitory] floor support me," she told the *Goshen College Record,* the campus newspaper. "They had a prayer for me."

Ann sent daily emails to Murray, although he wasn't allowed to reply. "I also sent him a pair of flip-flops because they don't have his size [12-13] in the country," she said.

Prior to his imprisonment, Ann last talked to her father on Sept. 11 when he called from a car phone on his way to jail. She was on mid-term break when Murray was released. According to CNN's website, he hopes to fly soon to Washington to join the rest of his family, who had left Malaysia before his prison sentence.

Murray, a Manitoba native, is a 1970 Goshen graduate who served with Mennonite Central Committee from 1973 to 1986 in Vietnam, Laos and Washington.

In a 1997 article titled "See You in Court" in *Far Eastern Economic Review,* he cited the case of the parents who sued a school after their son was dismissed from the debate team amid accusations of cheating. The boy's mother, the wife of a judge, accused Murray of "contempt of the court."

Murray was originally sentenced to three months in prison. Malaysia retains certain laws that allow judges to jail their critics. Upon appeal, his sentence was reduced to six weeks.

"Putting a journalist in jail for doing his job undermines the press freedoms that play such a critical role in building a democratic society," President Clinton said in the Sept. 23 issue of *Far Eastern Economic Review.*

Amnesty International added Murray to its list of political prisoners.

Malaysia's prime minister has accused Western nations of being "obsessed with" the case while ignoring human rights abuses in their own countries, according to CNN.

I had all of my freshmen friends on the [dormitory] floor support me. They had a prayer for me.

—Ann Hiebert

Ethiopian government returns church property

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia—Seventeen years after being seized by Ethiopia's then-communist government, the Meserete Kristos Church (MKC) once again has its Addis Ababa compound with guest house and administrative office building.

"It was a miracle for which we thank God," says Mulugeta Zewdie, executive secretary for MKC, which is the Mennonite church in Ethiopia.

The property, returned in August, was confiscated in January 1982, the beginning of the closing of all MKC congregations, thereby forcing the church underground until 1991, when the communist government was deposed. Six church leaders were also imprisoned.

For the past 17 years, the guest house had been used by the Addis Ababa Public Housing Authority as a men's hostel. MKC plans to again use the building as a guest house after it is repaired and refurnished. For the time being, both buildings on the compound will be used as offices. Plans call for the construction of a new three- or four-story administrative building.

EMM photo

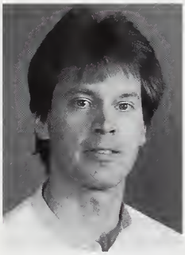
The guest house on the Meserete Kristos Church compound in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, before it was confiscated in 1982 by the country's communist government. The property was returned to the church in August.

In one of the most remarkable stories of 20th-century Mennonitism, MKC while underground exploded from 5,000 participants to 50,000. The number of baptized members today is estimated at 80,000.—*Linda Hovde for EMM News Service*

It was a miracle for which we thank God.

—Mulugeta Zewdie

Sixteen months after debilitating accident, MCC volunteer to return to Bangladesh work



I figured I could return to Bangladesh and work at a desk just as easily as sit at home watching TV.

—*Alan Bennett*

AKRON, Pa.—On June 12, 1998, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) engineer Alan Bennett set out on his motorcycle on a rural Bangladesh road, bound for a paper-making project where he planned to repair a leaky hydraulic press.

He never got there. Bennett pulled out to pass a truck and veered into the path of an oncoming bus. His motorcycle smashed the bus' grill, and his body shattered the windshield. He slid to the road unconscious, cut from the glass, his pelvis crushed and both wrists broken.

Now after after a long recuperation in the United States—including learning how to walk again, first with a walker, then with a cane and now without support—Bennett is waiting for a visa so he can return to Bangladesh to work in the MCC office.

"I was told it will take several years for nerve damage to heal," says Bennett, who is from Tacoma, Wash. "I figured I could return to Bangladesh and work at a desk just as easily as sit at home watching TV while that happens."

While there, Bennett also wants to meet with at least one member of the unlikely trio that helped him immediately after his accident. Mohammad Obaidur Rashid, a Muslim man in his late 20s, was riding on the bus. As it lurched to a halt, someone shouted that a man had been killed. The driver and other passengers fled, fearing retribution from the crowd that was gathering around the accident site.

But Rashid got out of the bus, placed his hand on Bennett's body and discovered a pulse. He called for someone in the crowd to help him. Only two people responded: a day laborer, the poorest of the poor in Bangladesh, and a man with a rickshaw. Rashid and the laborer placed Bennett in the back of the bicycle rickshaw. Rashid cradled Bennett's body, trying to stop the bleeding, as the driver pedaled toward the village clinic.

After MCC workers discovered what had happened, they offered Rashid money so he could replace his bloody shirt and to reimburse him for the rickshaw fare. Rashid refused, explaining that several months before the accident, God had revealed to him the importance of loving all human beings because they are all created by God.

Rashid did have one request: "to meet Mr. Bennett when he returns to Bangladesh," a meeting Bennett is also looking forward to.

Since the accident, Bennett has pondered the spiritual lessons he has learned. "Some Christians have said, 'You went to Bangladesh to do God's work. How could this happen?' That almost implies that God had a role in causing the accident," he says.

From Bangladesh, one of Bennett's Buddhist co-workers also puzzled over how God could allow something so bad to happen to a good person. Bennett chuckled at her conclusion, which she shared in an email: "I think it's not God, but your fault."

Bennett hasn't focused on why the accident happened but instead on how God has been present in the chain of events that followed. "God was in control of my care from the time I hit the bus windshield," he says.

Throughout his treatments, MCC covered all of Bennett's medical bills, made possible by the generosity of MCC supporters. His parents in Washington cared for their 42-year-old son, who returned home helpless and as dependent as a child.

Bennett also credited his "angels" for their parts, including MCC workers in Bangladesh and a retired Pennsylvania doctor who, in the midst of preparing for his daughter's wedding, flew to Bangladesh to accompany Benett back to the United States.—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

Vada Snider

True colors

Bethel College student Jesse Graber, senior from Newton, Kan., applies paint to the face of a young participant at the North Newton, Kan., school's Fall Festival Oct. 2. The annual event, which is the college's homecoming, drew about 8,500 people this year. Activities included musical and drama presentations, food booths, benefit auctions, class reunions and varsity soccer and football games.

College festivities feature alumni awards

Alumni of three U.S. Mennonite colleges have been honored or will be honored at fall celebrations at their schools.

Goshen (Ind.) College presented three Culture for Service awards Oct. 1 during the school's Alumni Weekend.

Adella Brunk Kanagy of Belleville, Pa., class of 1944, served with her husband, Lee, as Mennonite Board of Missions workers in Japan from 1951 to 1974. A nurse, Kanagy has also served as a chaplain.

Fred Speckeen of Calgary, class of 1953, served as president of four colleges between 1970 and 1994. He has also held administrative positions at two other colleges.

Howard Zehr of Harrisonburg, Va., attended Goshen from 1962 to 1963. He has been a pioneer in restorative justice, directing the first Victim Offender Reconciliation Program in the United States, located in Elkhart, Ind. Zehr is now professor of sociology and restorative justice at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg.

EMU gave its Distinguished Service Award to Paul and Leanna Kauffman Beiler and Alumna of the Year Award to Esther K. Augsburger on Oct. 10 during homecoming weekend.

The Beilers have spent 26 years providing leadership at Spruce Lake Retreat, a Mennonite-affiliated camping program near Canadensis, Pa. Paul graduated from EMU in 1965, Leanna in 1967.

Augsburger, class of 1971 and EMU's first art graduate, started a children's art program in inner-city Washington and helped create "Guns Into Plowshares," a sculpture made of disabled handguns that sits outside Washington's police headquarters. She lives in Harrisonburg.

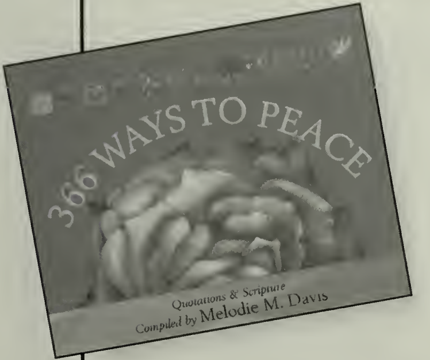
Bluffton (Ohio) College was to present the BC Service Award and Alumni Distinguished Service Award Oct. 16 during homecoming festivities.

Elizabeth Rumer Hostetler of Bluffton, class of 1968, will receive the BC Service Award, presented to faculty or staff. A former education professor, she founded the campus' Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center in 1987. She is now an elementary school principal.

Elfrieda Landes Ramseyer of Ottumwa, Iowa, class of 1958, will receive the Alumni Distinguished Service Award. A nurse, she is a health and wellness consultant and an adjunct professor at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa. She has long been active in health organizations.

Correction: The Michigan participants in a Mennonite Disaster Service hay drive came from Hamilton, not Hamilton County, as reported in the Oct. 5 issue.

Calendar Promotes Peace



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by the way ...

Choice Books sold 315,102 books in March, a record for sales in one month.

Stewardship council dreams about future work

TAMPA, Fla.—Stewardship concerns and principles have become more pervasive in the church, thanks largely to the work of the Giving Project, say Mennonite stewardship leaders. But the project is scheduled to conclude in three years, leaving questions about what follows.

About 30 people gathered for the annual Churchwide Stewardship Council Sept. 11-12 at College Hill Mennonite Church in Tampa to consider the future of stewardship education in the new Mennonite Church. The council executive committee will bring a proposal to the council's meeting next September.

"We've dreamed, and now we will need to forge a program in response," said Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and staff person for the Churchwide Stewardship Council. —*GCMC and MC news services*

MCC joins supporters of debt-relief campaign

WASHINGTON—Mennonite Central Committee has joined the list of proponents of canceling the debts of poor countries by the end of 2000. MCC executive director Ronald J.R. Matthies and other leaders of denominations, church agencies and Catholic orders met with World Bank officials on Sept. 17.

The religious leaders emphasized their support for the Jubilee 2000 debt-cancelation campaign. The world's poorest countries owe about $250 billion to the World Bank and other international financial institutions and to affluent nations such as the United States and Canada. The debtor countries pay millions of dollars annually in interest payments on the debt—money that could otherwise be channeled into health care, education, poverty reduction and economic development.—*MCC News Service*

Mexican colony Mennonites get help for dairy

WINNIPEG—Colony Mennonites in Mexico will receive a $33,800 (U.S.) loan from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada to try to boost disappointing dairy production.

The colony dairy cooperative, near Cuauhtemoc, this spring purchased 200 heifers from New Zealand. But they have produced an average of only 14 liters a day, considerably less than the 20 liters expected. With the MCC Canada loan, dairy co-op members want to buy 35 to 40 head of cattle from Manitoba.

The money will be loaned interest free for the first year, then at rate of 3 percent. The dairy wants to improve milk production to help overcome several years of drought-induced hardship.—*MCC Canada News Service*

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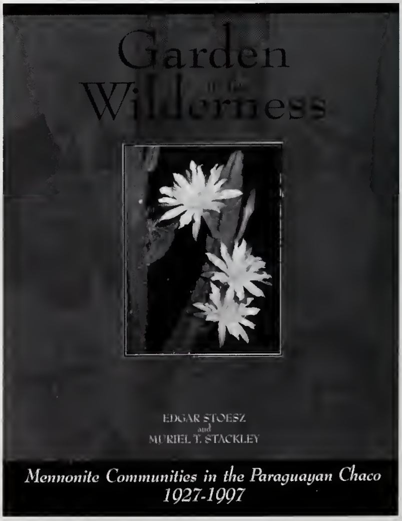
Garden in the Wilderness
EDGAR STOESZ and MURIEL T. STACKLEY
Mennonite Communities in the Paraguayan Chaco 1927-1997

Workers

Lind, Ralph, has started a pastorate at Albuquerque (N.M.) Mennonite Church.
Ludwig, Jeff, has started a pastorate at Pulaski (Iowa) Mennonite Church.
Serkel, Ron, has started a pastorate at Hopefield Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.
Tribby, Phyllis, on Oct. 15 started a pastorate at Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church.
Wenger, Tonya Ramer, has started a pastorate at Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Church.

Births

Aeschliman, Brooke J., Sept. 22, to Brian and Lori (Stuckey) Aeschliman, Archbold, Ohio.
Gascho, Alyna Mae, Sept. 13, to Chad and Tara (King) Gascho, Pigeon, Mich.
Gascho, Lance Jerald, Aug. 31 to Jeannie (Hochstedler) and Lyle Gascho, Pigeon, Mich.
Gerber, Colin Joel, Aug. 1, to Andrea (Knox) and Brian Gerber, Kidron, Ohio.
Gray, John Sawyer, Sept. 21, to John and Lori (Bissett) Gray, Hennepin, Ill.
Hershberger, Alyssa Nicole, Sept. 1, to Audra (Stuckey) and Jim Hershberger, Washington, Iowa.
Horst, Nathan Alton, Sept. 17, to Lynn (Alton) and Phares Horst, Moorefield, Ont.
Kipfer, Emmalene Grace, Sept. 30, to Denise (Dombrowski) and Kevin Kipfer, Akron, N.Y.
Kliewer, Marie Elizabeth, Sept. 29, to Andrew and Susan Kliewer, Omaha, Neb.
Leichty, Kayla Ann, Aug. 12, to Beth (Henkes) and Kurt Leichty, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.
Loflin, Mallory Lynn, Sept. 18, to Amy (Haunschild) and Joel Loflin, Wichita, Kan.
Marvin, Grace Rebecca Ann, Aug. 2, to Brian and Jody (Barkley) Marvin, Kanona, N.Y.
Maust, Nicole Alexandra, Sept. 16, to Dawn (Estes) and Kevin Maust, Caseville, Mich.
Nase, Jordan Riley, Sept. 23, to Chad and Rachel (Moyer) Nase, Souderton, Pa.
Schrag, Kelsey Kae, Sept. 28, to Jim and KaEllen (Litwiller) Schrag, Hopedale, Ill.
Shantz, Kristiana Hee Keener, Jan. 24, 1999, received for adoption Sept. 22 by Kathy (Keener) and Stan Shantz, Glendale, Ariz.
Shoup, Kristen Nicole, Aug. 7, to Lisa (Gerber) and Matt Shoup, Dalton, Ohio.
Wenger, Thaniel Lee Garrett, Sept. 26, to Kristina (Garrett) and Timothy Wenger, Lancaster, Pa.

Marriages

Baer/O'Connor: Allison Baer, Akron, N.Y., and Jonathan O'Connor, Akron, Aug. 28 at Alden (N.Y) Mennonite Church.
Beachy/Harrison: Brian Lawrence Beachy, Bay Port, Mich., and Marion Anne Harrison, Unionville, Mich., Aug. 7.
Belsley/Delicath: John Belsley, Washington, Ill., and Katrina Delicath, East Peoria, Ill., Aug. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.
DeFries/Krantz: Kristy DeFries, Alden, N.Y., and Michael Krantz, Clarence Center, N.Y., Aug. 14 at Alden Mennonite Church.
Dyck/Plett: Sheldon Dyck, Blumenort, Man., and Candace Plett, Mitchell, Man., Sept. 25 at Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church.
Honsaker/Yingling: Karen Honsaker, Roaring Spring, Pa., and David Yingling, Hollidaysburg, Pa., Sept. 25.
Mast/Wittenberg: Duane Mast, Goshen, Ind., and Beth Wittenberg, Constantine, Mich., Aug. 21 at Goshen.
Porada/Short: Jennifer Porada, Cincinnati, and Leonard Short, Cincinnati, Sept. 25 at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.
Roth/Schrader: Kevin Roth, Wayland, Iowa, and Kellie Schrader, Lees Summit, Mo., Sept. 25 at Kansas City, Kan.

Deaths

Barrie, Ryan James, 17, Harrow, Ont., died Sept. 23. Parents: Susan and James Barrie. Other survivors: brother Scott; half brothers Jay Kennedy, Colin Kennedy; grandparents Harry and Margaret Riediger and Mike and Florence Lauer. Funeral: Sept. 27 at Harrow Mennonite Church.
Gunden, Delmar, 73, Pigeon, Mich., died Aug. 12 of Parkinson's disease. Spouse: Magdalene Stutzman Gunden. Parents: John and Rachel Albrecht Gunden (deceased). Other survivors: children Delmar, Dawn McCain, Kayeleen Laney, John, Tami Stamm; 14 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Pigeon.
Hershberger, Jake, 82, Hartville, Ohio, died Sept. 24. Spouse: Delilah Hershberger. Other survivors: children Donna Fouts, Linda Tumer, Louise Moser, Ron, Darrell; eight grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Hartville Mennonite Church.
Ingold, Wayne, 74, Morton, Ill., died Sept. 17. Spouse: Velma Schrock Ingold. Parents: Harvie and Esther Heiser Ingold (deceased). Other survivors: children Mike, Vicki West; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 21 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.
Miller, Viola, 82, Fayette, Ohio, died Sept. 18. Spouse: John Miller (deceased). Parents: John and Sarah Short (deceased). Survivors: children Rollin, David, Calvin, Robert, Leanne Smith, Susan Balzer; 17 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.
Nice, Mary Barbara Benner, 83, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 28. Spouse: Henry Nice (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Ellen Cramer Benner (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Mary Ellen Detweiler, Sharon Moyer; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 1 at Souderton Mennonite Church.
Nisley, Lovina Mae, 78, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 4 of heart failure. Spouse: Ervin Nisley (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Lavina Yoder Kropf (deceased). Survivors: daughter Sharon Nisley Bontrager; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Clinton Brick Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Reesor, Alice Deckert, 64, Stouffville, Ont., died Aug. 28. Spouse: Harold Reesor. Parents: John and Mable Bauman Deckert (deceased). Other survivors: seven stepchildren; seven stepgrandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 31 at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont.
Roth, Orie, 85, Wayland, Iowa, died Sept. 25. Spouse: Wilma Roth. Parents: Joseph and Fannie Gerig Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children Dennis, Sheril Mullett, Rebecca Imhoff, Rosemary Yoder; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.
Shore, Viola Krabill, 82, Louisville, Ohio, died Sept. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Floyd Shore. Parents: Harry and Minnie Carper Krabill (deceased). Other survivors: children Myrtis Yake, Yvonne Valtierra, Wendall, Randall; one grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville, Ohio.
Thoman, Joe Emery, 75, West Liberty, Ohio, died Sept. 24. Spouse: Joan Brenneman Thoman. Parents: John and Amy Zook Thoman (deceased). Other survivors: children Stanley, Mary Jean Horn, Marilyn Gascho; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.
Voth, Cornelia, 88, Steinbach, Man., died Sept. 12 of cancer. Spouse: John Voth. Funeral: Sept. 16 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

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- **Southside Fellowship** seeks half-time ***pastor*** for two-person pastoral team. Good opportunity for experienced pastor interested in continuing seminary studies. Send resume to Pastoral Search Committee, Southside Fellowship, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

- **Menno House**, live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2000. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Drift Creek Camp** seeks ***caretaker***, a position for married couple beginning Jan. 1, 2000. Responsible for hosting, cleaning and maintenance. Salary, medical insurance, housing, utilities and some meals provided.

  Contact Ron Sears, Drift Creek Camp, P.O. Box 1110, Lincoln City, OR 97367; 541-996-3978.

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities. Location: East Petersburg or Millersville, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time community living adviser positions available in various group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time. To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237; email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **Menno Haven Inc. Retirement Community** seeks a ***director of gift planning***. Responsibilities will include setting organizational fund-raising goals, planning and implementing fund-raising activities, and cultivating relationships with prospective donors. Prefer candidate with at least 3 years fund-raising experience, a bachelor's degree, good communication and relationship-building skills, and an understanding of Mennonite faith.

  Send cover letter with salary requirements and resume to Human Resources, Menno Haven Inc., 1427 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201; email Cbumbaugh@Mennohaven.org. EOE

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- **Peace Mennonite Church** of Lawrence, Kan., a socially responsive congregation of 100 in a university community, seeks a full-time ***pastor***. Candidates should have understanding and appreciation of Mennonite history and Anabaptist theology. Responsibilities include preaching, church administration, spiritual leadership and support for the church's activities related to peace and social concerns. Minimum three years relevant professional experience. Thoughtful presence, sense of humor welcome.

  Send resume to Search Committee, Peace Mennonite Church, 1204 Oread Ave., Lawrence, KS 66044, or contact Mark Kind at 785-832-9219 or mkind2@excite.com

- **Mennonite Home of Albany** seeks ***executive director***. "A Christ-centered community providing life-enriching services," Mennonite Home of Albany is a 52-year-old CCRC with a reputation for faith-based, quality housing and services. Our 300 staff serve over 500 residents on our 90-acre campus and in the community. Seeking an experienced health-care and/or housing executive to provide leadership as we move from a focus on health care to offering enhanced services and housing options for older adults.

  Send resume to Christina Zelazek, human resource director, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus SE, Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; fax 541-917-1399; email chrisz@mennonitehome.com. Resumes accepted through Nov. 10. (Drug screen and criminal check required.)

- **Goshen College** seeks an individual to each ***piano and piano pedagogy***. This is a full-time, tenure-track position beginning August 2000. Doctorate in piano or piano/piano pedagogy preferred, college-level teaching experience required.

  Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of professional references to Paul A. Keim, academic dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings."

  Review of applications will begin by Dec. 15, 1999. The position will remain open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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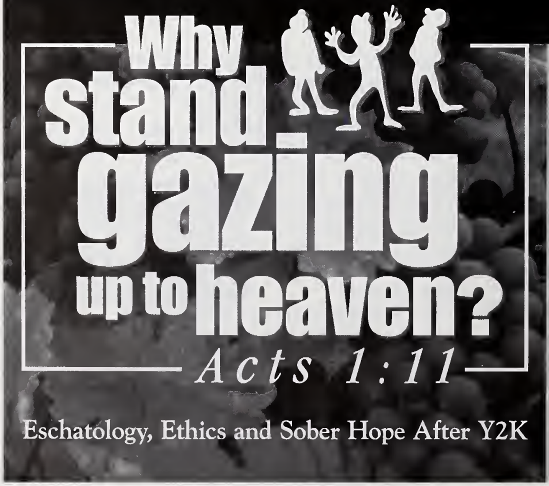
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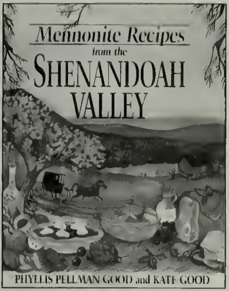

Mennonite Recipes from the Shenandoah Valley

by Phyllis Pellman Good and Kate Good

Known for its piercing mountain ranges, its soft hilly pastures, and its Civil War secrets, Virginia's Shenandoah Valley is also the home of thousands of Mennonites.

Their foods are as lush and as whole as the land on which it is grown and prepared.

Here are hundreds of those uncommonly tasty recipes, gathered from a comforting food tradition, rooted in the old South.

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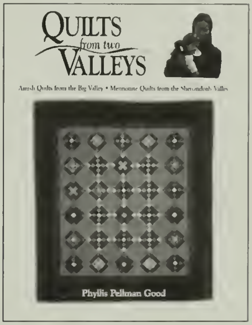
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Quilts from Two Valleys: *Amish Quilts from the Big Valley and Mennonite Quilts from the Shenandoah Valley*

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Two hidden valleys—one in Pennsylvania, the other in Virginia—held vibrant communities and quilting traditions during the closing years of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century. How do the quilts made by the Amish and Mennonites in these tucked-away places compare?

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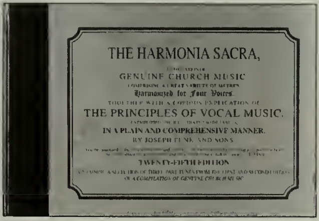

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Gordon Houser

A way in the wilderness

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.—Isaiah 43:19b

More than one person has applied psychological terms to the broader Mennonite church: dysfunctional, incestuous, in denial. At the Oct. 1-2 meeting in Kansas City, Kan., of the Constituency Leaders Council (see Oct. 12 issue, page 11), Franconia Conference leader Phil Bergey added another: co–dependent.

During a time of people sharing fears about the church's use of discipline to exclude members, stories emerged of relatives and friends who had been excommunicated (not allowed to participate in Communion) from Mennonite congregations for various reasons. Some of these people left Mennonite Church (MC) congregations and joined General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) congregations.

Later, other CLC members shared their fears about losing the church's faithfulness by giving in to people who wanted to remain in the church without changing their "sinful" ways.

Perhaps it's time to look to women for leadership in finding a way through the dilemma we face about membership. There are women leaders waiting to use their gifts.

Phil demurred. He said he didn't feel a part of either group expressing fears. Instead, he feared that "our core values of unity and avoiding conflict are tying us into knots." He went on to observe that MCs and GCs are in a symbiotic relationship, i.e., one that is mutually beneficial. We're co-dependent, he said, and coming together is threatening because we are afraid of losing that relationship.

In case you haven't heard, the two groups are using the term "transformation" instead of "integration." This means that instead of simply combining two bodies, we want to create a new one. Phil's observation insists that this will be difficult.

I talked with him later. He said that in a healthy relationship, each party is able to differentiate itself from the other. We're finding that hard to do. Each group tends to define itself in terms of the other.

I said, "Co-dependency implies addictive behavior. What's the addiction here?"

Phil didn't say.

As I reflected on this more, I wondered if the addiction is pride. One side takes pride in being pure, while the other takes pride in being open or welcoming.

Perhaps it's easier for one side to remain pure and excommunicate members if it knows they will be taken in by the other group. And perhaps that group finds it easier to take in excommunicated members if it lets the other side take the heat for being faithful.

The difficulty comes when we try to create a new group that incorporates both of the others. How do we reconcile the two tendencies?

If indeed our churches are addicted to pride—ironic for a group that emphasizes humility—how do we find a way in this wilderness? How are we transformed?

The CLC meeting provided some clues. Under the leadership of moderator-elect and CLC chair Ervin Stutzman, the group took time to offer prayers of confession. Ervin called this "a new way of working."

The group exemplified a spirit of openness to the working of God's Spirit. This seemed no more evident than when two women, Elaine Bryant and Susan Sommer, stood before the group as sisters on opposite sides of the fence on the homosexuality question and committed themselves to be in daily prayer for each other. They are willing to work together on "other, more pressing issues." They believe that one day they will be in complete unity.

I was not surprised that this came from two women. After all, Mennonite Women pioneered coming together, integrating GC and MC women almost two years ago. Perhaps it's time to look to women for leadership in finding a way through the dilemma we face about membership. There are women leaders waiting to use their gifts, as the stories in this week's issue illustrate (pages 4-7).

Let us all follow the CLC's example of confessing our sins and praying for one another, laying our pride before God's Spirit, who alone can lead us through the wilderness.—*gh*

[illegible]

theMennonite

December 28, 1999

millennial
nxiety

4 Love casts out fear

6 Doing right at a Y2K mart

9 Conference emphasizes All in the Family

16 How to survive December 31, 1999

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Playing the game

Having lived in Chicago and out of the Mennonite loop for the last 30 years or so, I thoroughly enjoy playing the Mennonite game whenever I get a chance and have found, as did Ervin Beck ("Common Ground, or, the Mennonite Game," Oct. 5), that it can be an interesting way to make connections, both Mennonite and otherwise. I have yet to meet anyone who was not impressed by my Mennonite roots and have discovered that we unwittingly enjoy a much better reputation than we probably deserve. I have also found the Mennonite game a really wonderful way to utilize that incredible network we share as a means for inclusion, introduction and involvement of those of us who are so-called "nonethnic" Mennonites. I could tell game stories for hours but will resist the urge.

Kudos also to Donald Steelberg for his Speaking Out on the new Mennonitism (Oct. 5). I couldn't agree more.—*Debra Bender, Chicago*

Testimony, theology and free will

On recent articles:

1. Peggy Yorke's testimony was wonderful ("One Soul's Journey," Sept. 21). It was full of joy and free of the right to self-pity that we often extend to the designated victim classes. More of this, please!

2. Re discussion about the theology of atonement: The Bible tells us that there was a heavenly necessity for the death of Jesus: "It was necessary for the heavenly things themselves to be purified with better sacrifices [than animals]" (Hebrews 9:23). The use of the word "purify" indicates that man's sin creates a problem in heaven itself, which only the blood of Jesus can take care of.

3. Some readers write about free will as though it makes God puny, as though he must shrink back at every exercise of human choice. The Bible account is entirely different. Man is fully answerable for his decisions, but God is in full control. Once again, Jesus' death is the prime example. Peter accused his hearers of putting Jesus to death with the help of wicked men (no mitigation of human responsibility here). But it was done "by God's set purpose and foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23)—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Welcoming sinners

I cannot help but respond to the good news and sad news letter of Ronald V. Woelk in the Oct. 5 Readers Say. I believe that his local congregation has got it right when their weekly services begin with or include the message, "All are welcome here." The heart of the good news is that everyone is indeed welcome. I believe that everyone is welcome in the Mennonite church. Every sinner is welcome. Every thief is welcome. Every military man is welcome. Every lesbian is welcome. Every "ethnic" Mennonite is welcome. Every alcoholic is welcome. Every tax cheat is welcome. Every liar is welcome. Every war monger is welcome. Every divisive person is welcome. Everyone, period.

When the faithful church declares the good news, every one of us sinners has the opportunity to hear the message that we do not have to remain in our sin. There is deliverance. I love to read the Scriptures where the writer makes a list of specific sins and then declares: "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

The sad news is that someone could spend 59 years in a Mennonite church and still proudly claim the glory of his military record and his intent to follow this way of the world until his death. Scripture says that when Jesus saw the crowds, "He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). Thank God that Jesus did not just leave them the way he found them. He had enough compassion to offer them a change. Jesus calls us to follow him. It is only possible by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.—*Doug Zehr, Leo, Ind.*

Shall the combined Mennonite church include congregations that accept noncelibate gay and lesbian people as members? The key word here is "members," and I say no. Marion Mennonite Church of Shipshewana, Ind., where I am pastor, is seeking to work out a position and ministry to those who are homoerotically tempted that is consistent with the Bible and current confessional statements of the Mennonite church. I believe that response is best captured in the words "welcoming but not affirming."

As a welcoming congregation, we will not put any stumbling block in the way of any person who needs to encounter God through the means of grace. We don't build walls around God's grace to keep people from experiencing it. That grace can be experienced in worship,

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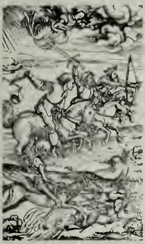

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ay readers say

Bible study, prayer, fellowship, hospitality, etc. How can we, or any other person struggling with sin, expect to encounter God's grace if we do not avail ourselves of opportunities to attend to the means that God uses to effect transformation in our lives? We will welcome and encourage all sinners, including those who are homoerotically tempted, to avail themselves of these God-given means of grace. We will seek to be channels of that grace.

As not affirming, we will be a congregation whose pastoral ministry to all who struggle with sin is one of integrity and truth. Thus we will not enable anyone to continue living in ways that are outside the will of God. We are to be like Jesus, healers not enablers. We will not seek to confirm anyone in a life of sin. We will, by God's grace, be a congregation characterized by that same grace that we have received. We will seek to be, as a local expression of the body of Christ, mediators of his grace to others. We will not, however, cheapen grace. The proper response to God's grace is God-enabled repentance and God-enabled obedience, not continuation in sin.—*Brian Arbuckle, Shipshewana, Ind.*

As far as homosexuality is concerned, I do not wish to embrace that which God has called an abomination. However, this should not preclude me from embracing someone God loves, though this may be their besetting sin. Which are my besetting sins? Could they be a lack of love, intolerance, self-righteousness, perhaps hatred? Which of these besetting sins do I wish to admit to? I do not feel that I have been anointed to sit in judgment of those whose responses to such people differ from mine. Is this the abomination the devil would happily use as a wedge to split our new church structure asunder?—*Eber Martin, Poland, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Luke Golobitsh

Love cast

by Walter Klaassen

The lurid descriptions of endtime events in books, on TV and videos are meant to frighten people into being born again. It's like staying in an abusive relationship because of fear.

Hardly a day passes but what somewhere on radio, TV, the Internet and in newspapers we get discussions of Y2K. It is associated in most people's minds with general disruption and chaos when computer clocks all over the world turn over at midnight to Jan. 1, 2000. However, the computer experts tell us this is not likely to happen. Glitches here and there, yes, but no worldwide disaster. So why are many of us so afraid?

TV's self-appointed experts on biblical prophecy are telling us with great excitement that Y2K may produce the global chaos that is required to set in motion the sequence of end-time events beginning with the secret rapture of the church and ending with the judgment at the great white throne. It will, we are told, create such worldwide confusion and instability that only a world dictator will be able to restore order, and that dictator will be the antichrist. Who would not be afraid for self, loved ones and for the disappearance of familiar life on earth?

The TV prophecy experts are experienced and skilled fear-mongers, and that is the first reason for their success. So while they preach about salvation through Christ by the grace and mercy of God, it is a message that appeals to the desire for self-preservation, for they promise that every born-again believer will be raptured out of this world before the real trouble with the antichrist sets in. The lurid descriptions of endtime events in books, on TV and videos are meant to frighten people into being born again. It's like staying in an abusive relationship because of fear.

The enormous influence of the TV prophecy experts among us is an indication of the lack of teaching in our churches on the subject of the end times. Many pastors are afraid to touch the subject for fear of causing controversy and because they are themselves uncertain about how to interpret the biblical materials about the end. The book of Revelation is, after all, in many respects an obscure book. But people are right to expect from Christian teachers an interpretation of the current state of the world with its litany of wars and violence, natural disasters, and the growing replacement of national governments by transnational corporations in the light of the Bible. The TV prophecy experts provide such answers, which is the second reason for their success.

Mennonites are no strangers to preoccupation with the end times. It was a major part of early Anabaptist history. The beginnings of the current passion for fear-inspiring end-times prophecy came at the beginning of this century. Samuel F. Coffman (1872-1935), a bishop of the Mennonite Church in Vineland, Ont., once wrote that younger Mennonite Church ministers picked up the new interpretation about the end from D. L. Moody at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. A few years later at a Bible conference in Pennsylvania, Amos D. Wenger, a prominent Mennonite minister, gave lectures on "Unfulfilled Prophecies," meaning prophecies about the end times. Many Mennonite leaders were drawn into dispensationalism over the years.

Sermon on the Mount: A dispensation, in the words of theologian C.I. Scofield, is "a period of time in which man is tested in respect to his obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God." In each of the seven dispensations he listed, God's demands were different. Thus, for example, the Sermon on the Mount belonged primarily to the kingdom dispensation, that is, to the millennium following the defeat of the antichrist. It therefore has only limited authority in the current dispensation of grace, or the church age.

Given the importance of the Sermon on the Mount for Mennonites, one can see that this new interpretation clashes with traditional views. To resolve problems of the interpretation of end-times materials in the Bible, conferences were called in Elkhart, Ind., in 1934 and again in 1952.

General Conference Mennonite Church congregations also did not escape the lure of sensational end-times prophecy. Theodore H. Epp gave much attention to it on his "Back to the Bible" broadcasts and in teaching at Grace Bible Institute, Omaha, Neb., beginning in 1943. In Canada, a number of ministers also preached these Dispensationalist interpretations, often influenced by the nondenominational Bible schools in western Canada. It was in a Mennonite Bible school that I first learned about antichrist and the great tribulation and Armageddon from teachers who had been at Dallas Theological Seminary. The best-known graduate of that school is Hal Lindsey.

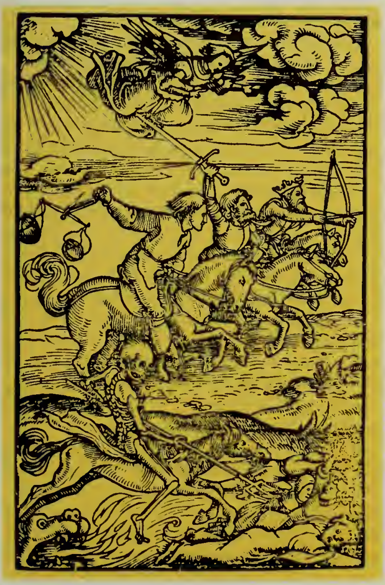
Y2K is trumpeted by prophecy "experts" like Lindsey as the event likely to bring about world government, a world religion and a world economy, thus getting everything ready for the takeover by the antichrist. Then,

out fear

according to their scenario, follow a series of unbelievable horrors, literally described, they assure us, in the books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation, all ending in the greatest, last and bloodiest conflict, the Battle of Armageddon. At that point Christ will return in glory and power and exterminate all who have opposed God. Then comes the millennium, established by violence and war upon a destroyed earth, and, after the final revolt, the great judgment and the end. No doubt this vision of the last years of human life on earth inspires terror for people not certain about who is telling the truth about these things.

But followers of Jesus don't need to be afraid. The Jesus who invited and accepted everyone and who died because God loved the world is the same Jesus who is also at the end. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The TV prophecy experts pride themselves on being biblical, which is the third reason for their success. But I believe they are wrong. The Bible does not speak about these things with one voice. It brings us three versions about the nature of the end. The first is the one we find in the books of Ezekiel, Zechariah and Daniel and which we meet in the New Testament in the preaching of John the Baptist. The message there is that because of the powerful prevalence of evil, God is coming in judgment to annihilate his enemies and to give the governing of the world to his faithful people.



RNS photo of "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," an engraving by Hans Holbein

The second is the Christian version of that tradition, which we find primarily in the language of the book of Revelation with its stomach-turning and terror-inspiring descriptions of divine judgment, also ending with the annihilation of God's enemies.

Suffering Lamb: The third is a mixture, often using the words and images of the first two but coming out at a different place. It begins in Isaiah, especially chapter 53, where God's chosen servant is exalted in the end because, instead of destroying his enemies, he is prepared to suffer and die for them. The kingdom of God is established not by exterminating violence but by suffering love. That is also the message of Jesus in the Gospels and especially of his voluntary suffering and death and his elevation to God's right hand in resurrection and ascension. That is also the message of the rest of the New Testament, and even, surprisingly, of the book of Revelation, despite all its violence. For the Lion of Judah, the destroyer, is transformed in Revelation 5:5-6 into the suffering Lamb of Isaiah 53 and John 1:29. From then on the description of Jesus as the suffering Lamb dominates this strange book.

It is said specifically about Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation that they are all visions, which means they are not literal descriptions of the future. We dream a strange dream and after waking say: "What a strange dream! I wonder what it means?" That is the question to ask of these biblical visions. Making them into literal descriptions of a future about to unfold makes nonsense of them. They all tell us that the future is in God's hands and that no matter how bad things get on earth, they can't get out of God's control. The New Testament message to us is that the God we meet in the Bible is not a destroyer but has the face of Jesus, the face of love and mercy. About Jesus it was said, "God did not send the Son into the world to be its judge, but to be its savior" (John 3:17, Good News Bible). This central fact of the gospel must govern the interpretation of everything connected with Y2K. We don't need to be afraid because God's love drives out fear.

Walter Klaassen, Abbotsford, B.C., is the author of Armageddon and the Peaceable Kingdom *(Herald Press, 1999).*

The Jesus who invited and accepted everyone and who died because God loved the world is the same Jesus who is also at the end. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Serving customers and employees: Galen Lehman lights an Aladdin lamp at his family's store in Kidron, Ohio.

Doing right at a Y2K mart

by Rich Preheim

Business has slowed down at Lehman's Hardware and Appliances. Sales of gas-powered refrigerators have cooled, and wood-burning stoves aren't as hot as they once were. Hand water pumps don't move as fast as they once did, while lamp sales have dimmed.

Not that the Kidron, Ohio-based, family-run company is complaining. There is still plenty of work to do, now and into the next millennium.

Located in the middle of the largest Amish settlement in the world, for nearly 45 years Lehman's has catered to folks who don't live on the electrified grid but rely on wood, gas and solar power: Amish in Ohio, missionaries in the Sahara, campers in California and others in all 50 states and dozens of countries who adhere to self-sufficiency and simple living. The company's stores in Kidron and nearby Mount Hope, its catalog and its website are filled with wood-fired canners and cast-iron kettles, hand-turned grain mills and sausage stuffers, kerosene lanterns and composting toilets.

But business has really boomed for more than a year as folks fearing the end of civilization as they know it—or at least an interruption to their creature comforts—come Jan. 1, 2000, have been seeking out alternate sources of light, heat and food preparation. Y2K, the technological malady that some people expect will shut down much of our computer-dependent world, has been good for Lehman's bottom line.

"We're a little bit above normal now," says Galen Lehman, vice president of operations and son of president and founder J.E. Lehman. "We're way down from where we were before."

What they were before was busy, particularly during the first several months of 1999, when the Y2K frenzy was at its peak. In one week in January, the company did eight times its normal business. "During that time I was working 15, 16 hours a day," Galen says. "There were lots of people who [practically] lived here."

Y2K has doubled—and complicated—business for Lehman's, one of the country's leading providers of nonelectric appliances. Galen estimates that the company this year has sold about 100 units of a specific cookstove, equal to that model's sales for the past decade. At one point, 700 grain mills were on back order. While Lehman's normally can ship an order 24 hours after receiving it, over the winter it was taking five to seven weeks.

Do the right thing: This increase in business might appear to be an economic bonanza, a golden opportunity to improve the company's financial picture. But Lehman's response has been tempered. Galen, a member of Kidron Mennonite Church, emphasizes that the skyrocketing sales have nothing to do with his management but that they simply fell into his lap. Since they did, however, he wants to do the right thing for his employees, his customers and his God.

While the company over the last two years has doubled its staff to 100, Galen says he could have easily used another 50 employees. But that would have increased the risk of laying off people after the new year. Even when the Y2K frenzy subsides and business slows down, Galen says, "I firmly believe in and have

> To many of these people [Y2K customers] we said, "You don't need this. Why don't you get some flashlight batteries or something." And they would not hear it.
>
> —*Galen Lehman*

every intent of avoiding layoffs."

Galen also refuses to exploit his Y2K customers—people overreacting to the prospects of disrupted utility service and economic collapse. Lehman's could push products on scared and ignorant customers. ("We've had five people want to buy a lamp who didn't know what a wick is," Galen says.) But employees have been instructed not to bring up Y2K with customers, and the company has not done any advertising related to Y2K. They even initially refused all media inquiries, although they have since been featured on National Public Radio, in *USA Today, Wall Street Journal* and elsewhere. Lehman's does not want to contribute to the hysteria already out there for its own financial benefit.

"To many of these people [Y2K customers] we said, 'You don't need this. Why don't you get some flashlight batteries or something.' And they wouldn't hear it," Galen says.

"One of the right things is not to tell people they are going to die if they don't use my product. ... I don't want to have to go before God and say I did everything I could to make a buck off of this and try to justify this."

Galen believes Y2K may bring some glitches, but he doesn't assume they will have anything do with God's return, of which he says, "No one knows the time." He has been disappointed by his fellow believers' reactions to the prophecies of gloom and doom that have been accompanying the impending change in the calendar. "Some of the people we had coming in were very, very frightened," he says. "They were expressing the apocalypse in biblical terms. ... There were many people who said this is the time when non-Christians will die."

And many of Lehman's Christian Y2K customers want to be ready when it happens, armed with canning equipment, lanterns and gas-powered washing machines, all purchased from Lehman's or similar businesses. "One man specifically said, 'Noah survived because he prepared,'" Galen says. "That's not what my Bible says. My Bible says Noah survived because he was righteous."

For many of those customers, he thinks, the problem is one of control. "They didn't want to count on God for anything," Galen says. "They wanted to do whatever it took to be ready on their own."

There has been one exception, he says, although it has been the only one. One customer wanted a large, cast-iron kettle so she could cook for her neighbors should it be necessary. "This was her chance to reach the unsaved community around her," Galen says.

Perhaps the biggest order he filled was for the patriarch who took from Lehman's Kidron store to his family's compound a 20-foot trailer holding three or four cookstoves, a gas washing machine and about 15 oil lamps. But Galen doesn't see much of that anymore as the frenzy dissipates and media attention wanes. "When [Y2K customers] come in now, they're saying, 'It could be a bad week or two, and I've always wanted a kerosene lamp anyway,'" he says.

Returns: In fact, Lehman's, which offers a 30-day, money-back guarantee, is now seeing a different kind of Y2K-related business: "We're getting Y2K returns every day," Galen says. "We even get calls from people who bought stuff way back in January and would like to return it now."

He tells of one customer who brought back a complicated water pump that takes about half a day to install. "They were willing to spend the money to buy it, but they were not willing to take the time to install it," Galen says.

While Lehman's has been flooded with new business, they still have their regular customers, who have been both frustrated and amused by people's attempts to quickly adopt a simple-living, self-sufficiency lifestyle before the end of the year. Amish and non-Y2K survivalists have often been unable to get the items they want because they are back ordered due to high demand. But the situation does offer remarkable perspectives on materialism, fear and religious belief. One Amish customer, trying to buy an out-of-stock item from Lehman's, told Galen, "I could wait until after Y2K and buy it cheaper at a garage sale."

Amish and non-Y2K survivalists have often been unable to get the items they want because they are back ordered due to high demand.

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite.

Hurry up and wait

Customers shouldn't have been in too much of a rush for that Aladdin oil lamp from Lehman's Hardware and Appliance in Kidron, Ohio. The wait earlier this year could have been as long as six months, because of unprecedented orders due to Y2K.

Aladdin, like many of Lehman's vendors, has been taxed by the flurry of orders in anticipation of Jan. 1, 2000, computer glitches. Aladdin and other large companies have since been able to catch up. But many of Lehman's vendors are small operations, such as the local Amish who make brooms and buckets. Those were the ones hit hardest by the Y2K bug.

"If you have someone making 50 whatevers a year, and all of a sudden you need 50 a week, of course you are going to be backlogged," says Glenda Lehman Ervin, Lehman's communications manager.

Furthermore, those small operators, while wanting to make a living, don't have a "capitalist mentality," she says. As a result, they don't want to step up production and make money. "The issue is being home for the family in the evenings," Glenda says.
—Rich Preheim

Red beans and masa

by Shirley Kurtz

Rich people devoid of compassion, merely loaded to the gills, should consider the possible consequences. Fending off marauders would be lots more consternating than enduring the minor inconvenience of one's own somewhat-reduced circumstances.

I think about the carpet—the dust, threads and crumbs, plus all the bark scraps and dirt from the wood stove, matting down into the fibers. Not being able to vacuum.

Also I've heard there's a species of tree here you can eat, the Virginia pine, an ugly, scrubby little thing.

Unlike my friend Audrey up in Lancaster County, Pa., I've not read those end-times survivalist books. I stumbled on a magazine article listing the sundry items a Y2K-ready household should contain, but I enclosed the article in a letter to our daughter and son-in-law in Nicaragua and can't remember now what all was on the list. I do recall something about antibiotics, and perhaps rope and flashlights and extra batteries and ammunition. A trowel was needed for failing toilets. You would need to line the commode bowl with a heavy-duty plastic garbage bag and then bury the waste somewhere in the garden.

On the phone, Audrey says, "Of all our friends, you're the best equipped." Maybe so. Our water is piped from the spring up on a neighbor's hill, which means there's no lack during a power outage; the commode even flushes. There are plenty of trees in our woods for the wood stove.

When the pharmacy in town ran a sale on candles last Christmas, four for a dollar, should I have helped myself to a cartload instead of all I could carry in my hands to the counter in two or three trips?

After the pharmacist filled my three-day prescription for sulfamethoxazole, I could have drunk lots of water and cranberry juice instead to clear up the infection and stashed the pills in a safe place. Only one of us could get sick, at this rate. With all the gas station pumps shut down due to no electricity and our car tank empty, we couldn't run for medicine.

We've always put up produce for the winter: applesauce and peaches and pickled beets in Mason jars, and corn and green beans in the freezer. I'm also thinking about a cow. Butter and ice cream despite hard times, plus if somebody's needing a little milk for pancakes.

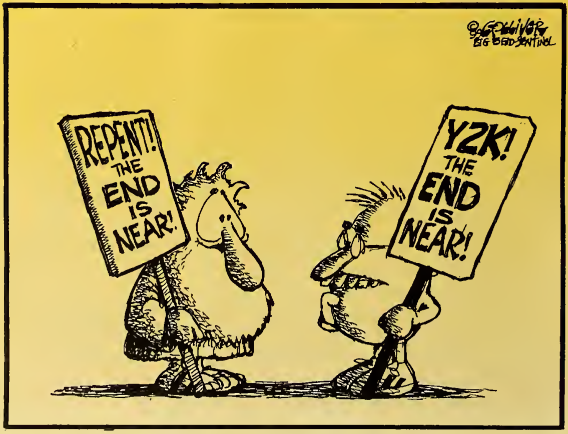
Following last November's hurricane that ripped through Honduras and Nicaragua, my husband and I waited uneasily by the telephone for word from Jennifer and John. In that needy region in our hemisphere, infrastructure as we know it scarcely existed in the first place, before the heavens dumped rain and floodwaters roiled. Why would God spare fat-cat nations like ours from catastrophe of a different sort? Anyhow, should the Y2K bug prove virulent and our consuming greed turn us panicky and malicious, we'll just be pulling the roof down on our own heads.

Jennifer called that article I sent absurd. "Those people want the end of the world to come," she added, in her letter. And in one to her brother Zachary: "Will you please keep Mom from stocking up? Don't spend money on stockpiling and then protecting. Think of all the poor people in the world—don't put more walls up between yourselves and them." She has a point there. Rich people devoid of compassion, merely loaded to the gills, should consider the possible consequences. Fending off marauders would be lots more consternating than enduring the minor inconvenience of one's own somewhat-reduced circumstances.

I'll finish what I was starting to say back there about the cow, if we get one, a little brown Jersey. She'd give creamy-rich milk, way more than we'd want, and the folks back here along Knobley Road could hike over with their buckets or jars, if worse comes to worst and we're all reduced to acting like neighbors, for heaven's sake. We could spare some eggs, too, if nobody steals the chickens.

Jennifer and John have begged us to come visit, so we plan to fly down. "I'm certain the trip will present you all with a different perspective," Jennifer said in her letter to Zachary. Maybe before our return flight we'll stuff our suitcases with the red beans the farmers at Casas Viejas grow, if they have any extra to sell, and a supply of "masa," cornmeal for tortillas. I can fry the tortillas right on top of our wood stove, no skillet. Maybe we'll consider just plain beans and tortillas adequate, even if the lights only flicker instead of going out, and the dust and crumbs don't collect.

Shirley Kurtz lives in Keyser, W.V.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BIG BEND SENTINEL
REPENT! THE END IS NEAR!
Y2K! THE END IS NEAR!

Gary Oliver

Conference emphasizes all in the family

Presenters broaden definition beyond nuclear unit

GOSHEN, Ind.—Attend one of those famous Mennonite potlucks, and a single person may find a problem as plain as the food on the table—a table often made to seat four or six.

That's a fine seating arrangement for two or three couples, but it doesn't encourage an unaccompanied person to sit down. Single people wanting to participate in the meal may find little accommodation at the table, be it the literal one of church potlucks or figurative ones of celebration and worship, said two researchers at a conference on "Mennonites and the Family," held Oct. 14-16 at Goshen College.

"We see relationships as [married] coupledom," said Andrea Krause. And coupledom is the type of relationship a person is expected to develop in his or her late teens or early 20s.

Krause, an English professor at Hesston (Kan.) College, and Beth Goering, a communications professor at Indiana University/Purdue University-Indianapolis, presented their findings after surveying single people, ages 32 to 71, who are active in Mennonite congregations. Krause and Goering called for an expanded definition of family because current church practices and common understandings can relegate nonmarried people to outsider status.

As evidence, Krause and Goering cited rituals such as marriages and baby dedications, the organization of Sunday school classes such as "young marrieds" or "young families," and serving Communion to units of spouses and children.

"A presupposition of what family is precludes what family could be," Krause said.

As a result of his experiences in group living arrangements, Dan Schrock, pastor of Columbus (Ohio) Mennonite Church, said, "I am moving … toward talking less about families and talking more about households."

Brett Dewey offered historical and theological support for broadening the church's perspective of family. A student at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., he asserted that believer's baptism subverts the nuclear family, that new believers enter into new relationships with God and with other believers regardless of biological connections.

"No longer can churches … assume power via familial name games," Dewey said.

Calling the church "our first family," plenary speaker John D. Roth, a Goshen history professor, said, "Our allegiance to Christ and his gathered community takes priority over the bonds of family."

This was a common and important theme for the early Anabaptists. Roth highlighted the *Martyrs Mirror* story of Anneken Jans, martyred in 1539 for her Anabaptist faith, leaving her 15-month-old infant an orphan. In his presentation, Dewey pointed out that the Schleitheim Confession is filled with family terms, including seven references to brethren, five references to father and three to children. He also noted early Anabaptist leader Balthasar Hubmaier's emphasis on the corporate aspect of baptism, that it requires submission to sisters and brothers in the faith.

The conference was sponsored by Goshen College, Mennonite Historical Society and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. It drew some 220 registrants, including academicians, pastors, social workers, nurses and full-time parents.

Roth, a member of the planning committee, said the conference was born out of the question of whether Anabaptism can offer any perspectives on family issues in this age when such issues are largely dominated and defined by Focus on the Family, Promise Keepers and others often associated with the Religious Right.

Plenary speaker Lisa Sowle Cahill, a Catholic theologian, said typical family values rhetoric, a part of the cultural lexicon for more than a decade and centered on the nuclear family, is often "not the direction of love of service to others."

"A totally Christian gospel and spirituality connects love of God with love of neighbor," she said.

The point was echoed by conference participant Doug Kauffman, a pastor at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa. "Family is not a self-serving unit in the community … but a unit of service for the larger community," he said.

The conference included presentations on historical and theological aspects of family, the arts and media, peacemaking, childhood, sexuality and congregational life. Held in conjunction with the conference was meeting of the Anabaptist Anthropologists and Sociologists Association.—*Rich Preheim*

Indonesians get book on martyrs

The tough times facing Indonesian Mennonites have led to the translation of a book based on the *Martyrs Mirror.*

Indonesian is the second language into which *Mirror of the Martyrs* by John S. Oyer has been translated. The 96-page book contains stories and illustrations from the *Martyrs Mirror. Mirror of the Martyrs,* published by Good Books, is also available in Spanish.

"We hope this book helps to prepare Mennonite congregations who are facing difficult economic and political conditions," says Indonesian church leader Paul Gunawan.

French, German and Japanese translations of the book are also planned.

Craig and Michelle, preschoolers at the Children's House in Dublin, Ireland, and Mennonite Board of Missions worker Linda Liechty examine a quilt sent by Valley View Mennonite Church in Spartansburg, Va. Liechty, a long-time MBM worker in Ireland, started the Children's House four years ago to provide opportunities for youngsters in the depressed Dublin neighborhood of Ballymun. Sixteen children participate in the program.

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

MBM Ireland worker creates haven for children amid disadvantages of Dublin neighborhood

> It is not really safe to play outside, even when their parent is with them. They really have no other outlet.
>
> —*Linda Liechty*

DUBLIN, Ireland—Children growing up in the north Dublin neighborhood of Ballymun encounter a cold, gray environment that dispels any natural beauty. In the shadow of seven 15-story towers and 18 eight-story housing blocks, nearly 20,000 people live in Ireland's largest high-rise housing development. A lush, green lawn might provide an inviting place for children to play. But the grass is littered with syringes, condoms, bottles and broken glass.

Ballymun has become synonymous with disadvantage, unemployment and deprivation. Despite an economic boom, Ballymun's unemployment rate is 64 percent. Seven of every 10 residents depend on social welfare as their only source of income. Half of all children in Ballymun are raised by single parents. Most children drop out of school by age 15.

"Young children in this society are ignored," says Mennonite Board of Missions worker Linda Liechty, who lives with her husband, Joe, within a mile of Ballymun. "I don't think there are ever enough resources put into making sure their needs are taken care of—until they get to an age where it's a problem when they start really acting up."

So in 1995, after two years of preparation, Liechty opened the Children's House, a Montessori-based preschool that provides an oasis for Ballymun children ages 1 to 4. In what was planned as a basement storage room, Liechty plants seeds of hope for tomorrow among the children of Ballymun today.

"It is not really safe to play outside, even when their parent is with them," Liechty says. "They really have no other outlet."

Behind a graffiti-laden steel door, children find a haven of safety and warmth. Each day from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., 16 children learn through art, music and other activities. They hear stories, go on field trips, eat lunch and play in a safe environment to prepare them for primary school at age 4.

Some of the children come while their mothers receive education and job-training from a neighborhood drop-in center.

"Ballymun is obviously a place with a lot of brokenness," Liechty says. "I have some kids who are from pretty dysfunctional homes. I had a child who had witnessed his uncle being stabbed."

Through government funding, two women each year serve as assistants at the Children's House. In addition, Liechty has managed to generate enough income to employ one of her former assistants, Edell Smyth, who has lived in Ballymun since she was 16.

"I would have never gotten the push to learn to read and would never have gotten the push to go back to [school] if I hadn't gotten the job here," Smyth says.

The Irish government plans to tear down the Ballymun high-rises, which were built in 1965, and move toward decentralized single-family housing. Although those changes make the future of the Children's House uncertain, Liechty is working to see that quality care and training for children remains available for the people of the neighborhood.

"I would like to see really good quality child-care options for parents in Ballymun," Liechty says. "It is the most important part of anybody's life. It is the time when we are all being formed."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

Correction: Five Mexican Mennonite pastors and 28 church members signed a statement calling for the closure of the School of the Americas. The number of signatories was incorrect in the Oct. 12 issue.

Return to Argentina

Patagonia assignment calls mission workers back to country where they met

ELKHART, Ind.—For Brent and Lourdes Hartzler, Argentina is familiar territory. They met each other there 13 years ago. And last month they returned with their daughters to become the newest members of a binational mission partnership.

The Hartzlers, from New Holland, Pa., have been appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) to join a church-planting team in the Patagonia region led by Mennonite churches in southern Argentina.

"We've always wanted to go back," says Brent, adding that the time never seemed quite right. "Then last year, the Patagonia mission project came and invited us to go. We thought, 'Well, this is a confirmation.' "

Brent, a native of Hesston, Kan., first visited Argentina with a Hesston College soccer team. He later returned several times to visit and work with missionaries Floyd and Alice Sieber. It was during these several monthlong visits that Brent and Lourdes became acquainted. They were married in 1988. Lourdes, who was born in Uruguay, moved to Argentina at age 16. Her ministry experience includes counseling and work with homeless children in Colombia.

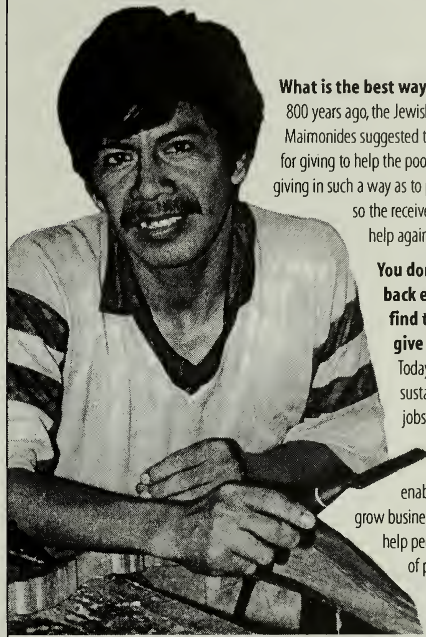
The Hartzlers have four daughters: Maria, Gabriela, Natasha and Alejandra.

The family will be working with the Patagonia Partnership, a joint effort of MBM; Arm in Arm, a network of congregations in Illinois Conference; the Argentine Mennonite Church; and a cluster of Mennonite congregations in southern Argentina, located along the Rio Negro Valley at the edge of Patagonia.

Still to be determined is the Hartzlers' assignment, as two locations are under consideration. One would be in Caleta Olivia in eastern Patagonia, planting congregations and overseeing other congregations in the region. In the second, in the Andean town of Chos Malal, the Hartzlers would serve as the base for work teams sent higher into the Andean highlands.

Brent, a former Spanish teacher at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School, enjoys working with young people. "It is exciting to see youth go through the process of developing a commitment to follow Christ," he says.

Lourdes has an interest in intercessory prayer and hopes to use her training in counseling. "I hope people there can see Jesus' love through me, a carrier of mercy," she says.
—MBM News Service



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MCC meat canners hit the road

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee's portable meat canner and three-member crew left Oct. 12 for Middlefield, Ohio, the first stop of the six-month 1999-2000 canning season.

The canner will stop at 33 locations in 12 states and Ontario, processing 3,500 to 4,000 cans of beef, turkey, pork and broth a day. Projections call for 364,000 cans to be processed during the season.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

Otto von Bismarck in 1867 proposed exempting Prussian Mennonites and Quakers from military service, but the provision was eliminated by the legislature.—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*

Fearful Timorese refugees get MCC assistance

AKRON, Pa.—A group of Timorese refugees in hiding near Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, are receiving assistance from Mennonite Central Committee. MCC has contributed $10,000 to an Indonesian church committee providing food, medical care and shelter while trying to arrange the refugees' safe passage to other countries. The refugees, 54 adults and 24 students, had been working for Timor's independence and now fear for their lives.

"The militias have gone into hiding but have vowed to return," says Clair Brenneman, MCC's Indonesia corepresentative. "There are reports that militia are harassing refugees in camps across the border in West Timor, where access to foreigners has been tightly restricted."

MCC earlier contributed $10,000 to an Indonesian Mennonite effort to help people displaced by violence in East Timor and Ambon.—*MCC News Service*

CPT finds violent games available to children

CHICAGO—Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members visiting five Chicago-area stores discovered children can easily obtain violent toys and videos.

Violent video games, such as those marketed with "Choose a mutilation technique" and "Battle as a blood-thirsty monk," can be sold to anyone of any age, said employees at Wal-Mart and Kmart stores, even though they are rated for players older than 17 years old.

Also at Wal-Mart, the CPT visitors asked why the store carries guns that look like real weapons. An assistant store manager noted that those weapons have orange tips, meant to alert police and others that the gun is fake.

A manager at a Kay-Bee Toys store said she did not have the authority to take certain products off the shelves. But she also said she does not allow her son to play with toy guns.—*CPT News Service*

Hesston College starts Anabaptist series

HESSTON, Kan.—Apocalypticism will be the theme for the inaugural presentations of Hesston College's new Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series. Duane Yoder, pastor of Bay Shore Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., will speak Oct. 30-31 on "Apocalyptic Thought and the Book of Revelation at the Year 2000."

"[The series'] purpose is to enrich the life and mission of the college and area Mennonite churches," says Bible professor Marion Bontrager. "We hope to bring in speakers and offer programs twice a year on current topics of vision, faith and discipleship."

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Births

Becker, Seth Michael, Sept. 15, to Crissa (Weaver) and Joel Becker, Richardson, Texas.

Bergey, Lincoln Balmer, Sept. 25, to Darla (Balmer) and Mark Bergey, Sellersville, Pa.

Farris, Darren Mitchel, Aug. 20, to Joanna and Troy Farris, Gulfport, Miss.

Funk, Matthew Taylor, Sept. 17, to Dawna (McKee) and Stacy Funk, Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Geyer, Levi Aaron, Sept. 7, to Anna (Yoder) and David Geyer, Oxford, Iowa.

Hostetler, Hunter Levi, Sept. 8, to Jeff and Melissa Hostetler, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Kern, Kory Jacob, Sept. 25, to Kari (Wenger) and Shaun Kern, Goshen, Ind.

Kliewer, Marie Elizabeth, Sept. 29, to Andrew and Susan (Pascarella) Kliewer, Plattsmouth, Neb.

Klippenstein, Miranda Nicole, Sept. 8, to Dean and Wendy Klippenstein, Altona, Man.

Lehman, Daniel Ray, Sept. 26, to Gary and Kathleen (Kurtz) Lehman, West Liberty, Ohio.

McNamara, Michael Aaron, Sept. 20, to Marc and Michelle (Clemmer) McNamara, White Pigeon, Mich.

Miller, Brock Michael, Sept. 17, to Pam (Agee) and Todd Miller, Middlebury, Ind.

Miller, Nicole Danielle, Sept. 23, to Denise (Yoder) and Luke Miller, Wichita, Kan.

Nussbaum, Rosemary Odle, Sept. 8, to Jennifer (Odle) and Tim Nussbaum, Goshen, Ind.

Penaflor, Harrison Gregory, Sept. 24, to Beth (Schrock) and Jim Penaflor, Hartville, Ohio.

Raber, Nathan, Sept. 25, to Heather (Bixler) and Kenneth Raber, Hartville, Ohio.

Schmidt, Noah Riley, Aug. 17, to Darren and Tanya Schmidt, Altona, Man.

Winter, Conner Ford, Sept. 15, to Kathy-Jo and Sean Winter, Rosenfeld, Man.

Yoder, Janae Elizabeth, Sept. 3, to Bonnie and Lawrence Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.

Zehr, Alexander Joseph, Sept. 30, to Aleta (Steria) and Andrew Zehr, Croghan, N.Y.

Marriages

Brittell/Hooley: Catrina Brittell, Nampa, Idaho, and Corey Hooley, Albany, Ore., Sept. 18 at Church of Christ, Nampa.

Eshleman/Hostetler: Kevin Eshleman, Upland, Calif., and Cydney Hostetler, Milford, Neb., Sept. 25 at Hawaii.

Farney/Hirschey: Perry Farney, Croghan, N.Y., and Pearl Hirschey, Lowville, N.Y., Sept. 4 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.

Forrey/Wenger: Matthew Forrey, Mountville, Pa., and Tammy Wenger, Elizabethtown, Pa., Oct. 3 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Glenn/Grau: Angela Sue Glenn, Lowville, N.Y., and Eric Grau, Lowville, Oct. 2 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.

Deaths

Augspurger, Mary Olive, 85, Pulaski, Iowa, died Sept. 26 of leukemia. Survivors: son Roger; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Pulaski.

Dyck, Maria, 78, Altona, Man., died Sept 16. Spouse: Jacob S. Dyck (deceased). Parents: William and Katherine Harder Toews (deceased). Survivors: children Jacob, Wilfred, Reginald. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona.

Griffin, Brenda, 29, Davidsville, Pa., died Sept. 18 of complications from surgery. Parents: Telford and Sondra Griffin. Other survivors: brothers George, Eric. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville.

Hersh, Dorothy, 85, Line Lexington, Pa., died Oct. 5 of a stroke. Spouse: Harry Hersh. Other survivors: children David, Ruth Delp, Esther Kollars; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Moyer, Newton, 74, Sellersville, Pa., died Sept. 26. Spouse: Elizabeth Landis Moyer. Parents: Abram and Katie Moyer. Other survivors: children Nancy Makin, Eileen Mertz, Martha Miller; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 1 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

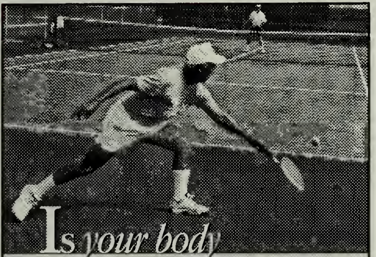
Peifer, Mary Hoober, 86, Lititz, Pa., died Sept. 24. Spouse: Irvin Peifer. Parents: Jacob and Lydia Ann Burkholder Hoober (deceased). Other survivors: children Amy Marie Taylor, Rosanne Rohrer, Carol Kreider, Martha Kilheffer, Irvin, Jay; 20 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz.

Rouse-Smith, Margaret Alice Johns, 53, Culpeper, Va., died Sept. 25. Spouse: William Dean Smith. Other survivors: children Dawnne Rouse Sow, George Rouse Jr., Joshua Rouse, Andrew Rouse, Tamisha Rouse; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Culpeper.

Schmidt, Charles, 85, Hesston, Kan., died Sept. 30. Spouse: Edna Berg Schmidt (deceased). Parents: Cornelius and Katherine Voth Schmidt (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Jeanne Banulski, Marilyn Ruby, Carol Sooby; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Schroeder, John, 75, Winnipeg, died Aug. 29. Spouse: Henrietta Hildebrand Schroeder. Parents: Frank and Helene Hildebrand Schroeder (deceased). Other survivors: children Wesley, Lucille, Randy, Frieda, Lori, Curtis. Funeral: Sept. 1 at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona, Man.

Voth, Alvin, 95, Pocatello, Idaho, died Sept. 11. Spouse: (1st) Lydia Janzen Voth (deceased). (2nd) Vivian Pankratz Voth (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Pankratz Voth (deceased). Survivors: children Elda, Clifford; 11 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, Idaho.



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classifieds

- **Bluffton College** music department seeks a full-time ***director of choral activities***. Tenure-track position beginning fall 2000. Candidate must have doctorate (or be near completion) in choral conducting and demonstrated excellence in college-level teaching. Elementary music teaching experience is desirable. Ability to teach undergraduate courses in applied voice, choral methods/literature, choral conducting and related areas, and to provide leadership for a choral program that includes two college concert choirs, two college/community oratorio choirs, and small ensembles. Direct Camerata Singers, a select touring chamber choir.

  For further information see http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications will begin Dec. 1, 1999, and continue until the position is filled. Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Southside Fellowship** seeks half-time ***pastor*** for two-person pastoral team. Good opportunity for experienced pastor interested in continuing seminary studies. Send resume to Pastoral Search Committee, Southside Fellowship, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

- **Richmond Mennonite Fellowship**, a small congregation of 18 families in Richmond, Va., seeks a part-time ***pastor***. Emphases will be on planning and leading worship, and preaching. Send resume to Search Team, 7612 Wanymala Rd., Richmond, VA 23229.

- **Menno House**, live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2000. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities. Location: East Petersburg or Millersville, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time community living adviser positions available in various group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time. To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237; email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **First Mennonite Church**, a vibrant, urban community of 40-50 in San Francisco, seeks up to a 3/4-time ***pastor***. Emphases will be worship leading and preaching. Pastor will serve as primary congregational communication link, work with strong lay leadership, counsel when appropriate, and be involved in Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference and denominational activities.

  Contact Search Team, 311 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131; 415-647-6293; email DBasinger@elanpharma.com

- **Mennonite Home of Albany** seeks ***executive director***. "A Christ-centered community providing life-enriching services," Mennonite Home of Albany is a 52-year-old CCRC with a reputation for faith-based, quality housing and services. Our 300 staff serve over 500 residents on our 90-acre campus and in the community. Seeking an experienced health-care and/or housing executive to provide leadership as we move from a focus on health care to offering enhanced services and housing options for older adults.

  Send resume to Christina Zelazek, human resource director, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus SE, Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; fax 541-917-1399; email chrisz@mennonitehome.com. Resumes accepted through Nov. 10. (Drug screen and criminal check required.)

- **Hesston College** seeks ***Bible instructor*** to teach biblical studies courses in the general curriculum and Pastoral Ministries Program. Desired qualities: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to the Mennonite church. Master's degree minimum. Teaching and pastoral experience preferred. Full-time position available August 2000. Application review begins Jan. 10, 2000.

  Send resume and references to Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8206 or email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Peace Mennonite Church** of Lawrence, Kan., a socially responsive congregation of 100 in a university community, seeks a full-time ***pastor***. Candidates should have understanding and appreciation of Mennonite history and Anabaptist theology. Responsibilities include preaching, church administration, spiritual leadership and support for the church's activities related to peace and social concerns. Minimum three years relevant professional experience. Thoughtful presence, sense of humor welcome.

  Send resume to Search Committee, Peace Mennonite Church, 1204 Oread Ave., Lawrence, KS 66044, or contact Mark Kind at 785-832-9219 or mkind2@excite.com

- **Goshen College** is seeking an ***administrative assistant*** for the Mennonite Historical Library with a start date of Dec. 1, 1999. This full-time position provides a wide variety of services to patrons and staff, including receptionist, reference, acquisition of holdings, circulation, record-keeping and other office duties. Bachelor's degree preferred, some college required. Computer skills in Windows with word processing required. Strong organizational skills, customer orientation, and general research skills with genealogical background highly desirable.

  Send letter of application with three references to David Janzen, Human Resources, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526, or apply on web site www.goshen.edu/oncampus under human resources, or fax resume and three references to 219-535-7060. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Applications deadline: Nov. 8 or until position filled.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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Making a silk purse from Y2K

by Lynn Miller

The more I listen to "Christian" radio, the more embarrassed I get. Maybe I expect too much, like a message of hope and faith and good news. But lately all I hear is gloom and doom and no small amount of outright hysteria about what's going to happen at midnight Dec. 31, 1999.

Everything from the end of the world by nuclear holocaust (because the computer-run missile systems of the world will be confused by the change and think they are being attacked) to the utility companies shutting down the flow of electricity across North America. And the advice from these "Christian" prophets of doom includes converting your assets to gold, building bomb shelters and storing food in them, and installing non-electric appliances in the kitchen.

What's embarrassing to me is that the only place you hear this high a level of anxiety is on "Christian" radio, and what is even more embarrassing is that almost all the advice is based on self-survival. Not much about how the church will minister to the world if and when the lights go off.

Here's a suggestion. Something to do now. To every Mennonite who has a wood stove, fireplace or gas heater that you can light with a match, let your neighbors know now that if there's no heat in their house on Jan 1, 2000, they can come to your house to get warm. (And tell them to put their perishable food on the back porch; it will be winter, after all).

And to every Mennonite farmer who has grain in the bin, let your neighbors know that if the grocery stores run out of food and their children are going hungry, just bring a bucket and take some grain home with them (ask grandma to teach them how to make food from whole grain; at least half the world does that every day). And urban congregations can tell their neighbors that they know thousands of Mennonite farmers who have lots of food.

And every Mennonite congregation that has a mission budget can use a little of it to take out an ad in the local newspaper reminding people that the world will end when God wants it to end, not when the computers get confused. And God promises to be with us even when the electricity is off. Oh, and one more thing. Something I have already done to prepare myself for whatever happens at Y2K. It's simple, it doesn't cost anything, and it has already made an enormous difference in my own level of anxiety. Whenever you hear Y2K hysteria on a "Christian" radio station, tune in to National Public Radio and listen to Mozart for a while.

Lynn Miller lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

Ready for Y2K

By and large, our household isn't too bad off. Our compost pile is definitely Y2K compliant. I checked the kitchen utensils, and except for the can opener (the manual one), I do not anticipate any problems. The bathroom seems to be OK, too.

There was a Y0K problem, too. That's why Jesus was born either in 4 B.C. or A.D. 7, which makes history a trifle problematic. Jesus was born 4 years Before Christ?

Y2K roughly means Year 2000, which, loosely translated from the Latin, means, "Nothing will work." Or, as the Anabaptists wrote in the Pleistocene Confession, "Buy batteries." What it really means is that—according to those scientists who haven't already laid in a supply of dried apples, distilled water, oatmeal, several videos of recent *Simpsons* episodes and a spare generator running on sunflower seed oil—at midnight on Dec. 31, 1999, anything with a computer chip in it will go wild, throwing confetti, drinking WD40 and kissing any word processor in circuit. This is because it won't recognize anything with a double-zero date, which is pretty well my story until I met Helen.

A lot of preachers are warning us about 2000. Seems some of them have heard that at midnight an archangel with his terrible swift sword and a few thousand avenging angels is going to come here. The Y2K thing is even worse. Angels you can beat off with rolled-up newspapers, but what are your options when computers go down?

In the office, we're not going to be caught off guard. Twice a week we hold drills that consist of Anita practicing her best screaming of "My computer! My computer!" and Helen running around relighting the candles that have blown out. I think we're well on the way. Where to I'm not sure.—*Vern Ratzlaff, from* Church Chatter, *the newsletter of Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon*

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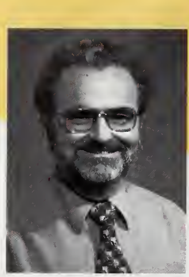


J. Lorne Peachey

How to survive December 31, 1999

Like most writers in this week's issue, I am skeptical about Y2K. How can a society like ours, that likes to think itself so sophisticated and together, spend so much time anticipating its own demise?

Perhaps we really do worship the false god of technology. Now, like Frankenstein, we are afraid of our idol. It has turned into something many of us don't understand. One of my computer technician friends tells me that every business day sees more software crashes and computer failures than will take place when the clocks reach Jan. 1, 2000. Most of these are fixed without notice. Yet the myth persists that somehow all the world's technological crashes will converge into one moment, and we will revert into darkness and chaos.

Although a lot of us are skeptical, we're still hedging our bets, buying an extra can of soup here, a roll of toilet paper there. Lynn Miller has a creative idea about what to do with this accumulation (page 15). Let our neighbors know we have it—and are prepared to share it. It's OK to be ready for any contingency. We can make this one a chance to be the good neighbor Jesus said his followers should be.

> Suppose the Y2K disaster really does happen. I can think of no place I'd rather be when the lights go out than with people I love and with whom I worship and serve.

Many will need good neighbors when the clock goes from 11:59 in 1999 to 12:00 in 2000. Nervous people are already doing strange things, like overbuying hurricane lamps and wood stoves at Lehman's Hardware in Kidron, Ohio (see page 6). In France the national railway has decided to shut down for a half hour surrounding midnight because of passenger fears.

We Christians should be able to do better. Suppose every church in North America or—if that dream is too big—suppose every Mennonite congregation would bring in the new year with a celebration, a Y2K neighborhood party. We'd send out invitations saying: "If you're afraid, if uncertainty makes you nervous, if you want to be with others when a new millennium starts, come join us for a New Year's party."

What would we do? Sing, of course. What better way to go into the future, known and unknown, than with a song?

We would also eat. Good Mennonite foods. From around the world. This New Year's Eve we could throw a Mennonite potluck to top all Mennonite potlucks. Food can do a lot to ease fears, calm anxieties and bring people together.

We could play games. Pray. Talk. Watch videos. All those things we've done at other New Year's Eve parties. But this one would have a difference. This one would be open to anyone who needs company and support as we go from one millennium to another.

Suppose the doomsayers are right. Suppose the Y2K disaster really does happen. I can think of no place I'd rather be when the lights go out and the water quits running than with people I love and with whom I worship and serve. Beats sitting at home alone trying to protect myself and what I own—as many are rumored to be ready to do, even with guns.

Or suppose the predictions of Jesus' return come true, that we see our Savior descending through the clouds as the clock strikes midnight. Wouldn't it be grand to experience the second coming hand-in-hand with those who have been part of my sometimes-on, sometimes-off attempts to live the life of a disciple?

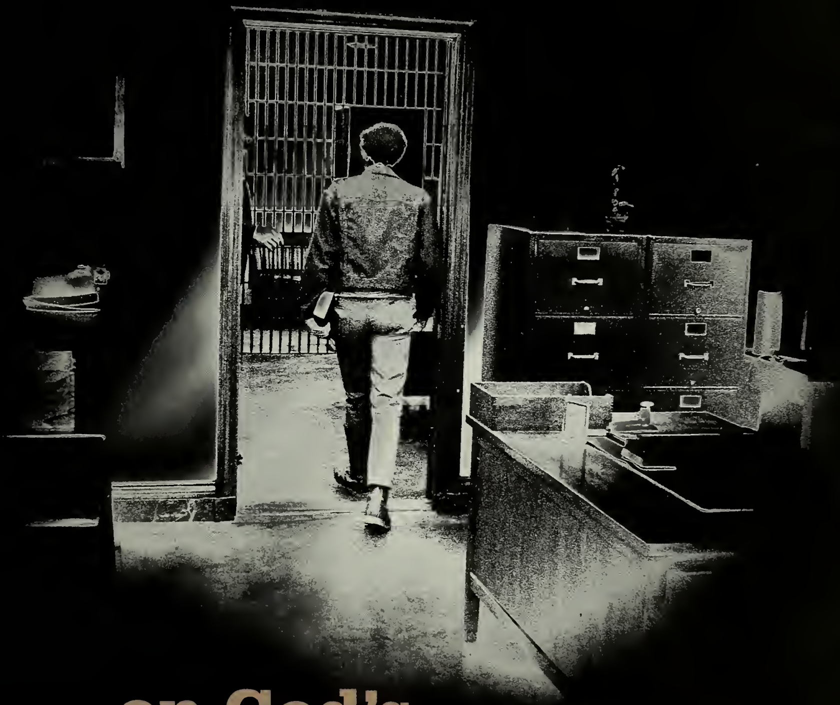
Or suppose none of this happens, that Dec. 31, 1999, slips into Jan. 1, 2000, much like any other New Year's Eve since humans have been keeping track. Our time would not have been wasted. We live in a day when the church could surely use a party. We may even give a future generation some ideas for bringing in the third millennium.

For Christians, what matters is not what we believe about Y2K—whether we're skeptical or convinced the world will end. What matters is what we do with what we believe.

Y2K can become another opportunity to continue the mission to which we have been called: to share the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ with those who are scared, lonely, outcast, lost. We could even make it fun by throwing a party that could end (and begin) all parties.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

November 2, 1999



on God's death row

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16 An open letter to Jesse Ventura

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Raising its voice

The new Mennonite Church is in the midst of renaissance. During this time, the church must recommit itself to peace. Not peace that is merely the absence of conflict but positive peace that addresses injustice in the world and works to create tension with violence wherever it may be so that it can be confronted and overcome. To this end, the Mennonite Church must become much more vocal in areas which have traditionally been left to the earthly realm.

As a first step, the church, both in Canada and the United States, must explore establishing permanent representatives in Ottawa and Washington to speak to the powers on behalf of Mennonites in North America. Other denominations have had liaisons working for a number of years. Mennonite Central Committee has carried on much of this work in the past. But by relying on MCC to be the voice, the church has been able to avoid dealing with the difficult questions of war and peace that MCC deals with on a daily basis.

Martin Luther King Jr. saw nonviolent social action as an outgrowth of his faith in Christ and the doctrine of peace. If we are to claim this same Christ that King claimed, we must struggle with the hard questions of peacemaking and be willing to make radical statements and do radical things. Ideally, once the work of integration/transformation is completed, the Mennonite Church can deal with these questions not only on a personal level but on a denominational level as well, so that its voice can be added to the everlasting song for justice and peace.—*Keith Swartzendruber, Elkhart, Ind.*

Inside, outside

It is a bold move to wrestle with the Mennonite Game in your publication and attempt to redefine its purpose. Yet trying to walk the line between criticism and support of the Mennonite Game left me feeling just as ambiguous about the whole thing as before reading the article ("Common Ground, or, the Mennonite Game," Oct. 5). I am not an ethnic Mennonite, and this has shaped my feelings toward the game. I have found that ethnic Mennonites do not understand the strangeness of experiencing the game in full motion without prior knowledge of its existence. The lack of any common ground is difficult to deal with—to not know anyone, to not have attended a Mennonite school, to not have been to a convention, to not have a relative or friend in Mennonite Central Committee or Mennonite Voluntary Service.

Not that this exclusion lasts long, because I have quickly met or heard of many Mennonites since my first experience with the game. But what of those who feel excluded and never return to a Mennonite church or home? Based upon my personal experiences, I would like to see the game played in such a way that clearly serves to benefit people in need, for Mennonites to be like the Good Samaritan. But be careful; common ground is a slippery road to exclusion. Name dropping leads to one-upmanship, and all of this could lead to self-righteousness. Do not drop names because you are out of your comfort zone, and do not swap experiences to gain saintly points. Be a Good Samaritan for the sole glory of God.—*Paul Hebblethwaite, Fresno, Calif.*

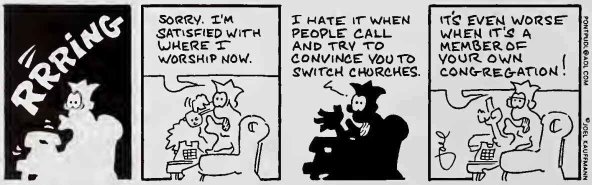
Chain reaction

Thank you, June Thomsen, for your balanced contribution to the parade of atonement letters (Readers Say, Oct. 12). I also know of Don Richardson's book *Peace Child*. Just as the peace child modeled the mediative, reconciling role of Jesus, Thomsen's letter serves as a bridge to improve dialogue between those who are open to J. Denny Weaver's view and those who repeatedly say, "There's power in the blood." Perhaps one fruitful area of conversation is the restorative justice movement (which owes much to Mennonite foundations). The application of biblical concepts to help victims and offenders experience healing and reconciliation has opened new windows to illuminate our understanding of atonement theology.

Another good bit of mediating literature can be found in *Mere Christianity*, chapter four. C.S. Lewis delineates between theories or images of atonement and "the central Christian belief that Christ's death has somehow put us right with God."

Weaver's writings have clearly sparked a chain reaction, and I thank God for the way it quickens all of us to rethink an important issue.

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann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y readers say

My hope is that the zeal to learn will outrun the zeal to defend and that, in the end, the ongoing volley of ideas will help us to better follow the One who, like a good shepherd, laid his life down for us.—*Ted Lewis, Pawnee Rock, Kan.*

Thank you

I read of Lorne Peachey's decision to step down as editor ("*The Mennonite* Editor to Leave Position in 2000," Sept. 28). I am writing to express deep appreciation for the sensitive and Spirit-led leadership Peachey has brought to the Mennonite church. As individuals and as a church, we are the richer for it. His commitment to Christ and to the trustworthiness of Scripture, accompanied by his quest for spiritual growth, have been exemplary. Thank you, Lorne Peachey. And thanks be to God.

I pray that the search committee may experience grace, peace and spiritual discernment as they search for Peachey's successor.—*Glen A. Roth, Lancaster, Pa.*

Words in his mouth

It may be hard to get the Apostle Paul to say much more than he has said (Dustin T. Miller in Readers Say, Oct. 19). But if the apostle says Ervin Stutzman is putting words in his mouth when he writes "sexual involvement outside the marriage covenant between a man and a woman is sin," I'll be greatly surprised. It will go against all of the understandings of the church of Jesus Christ for more than 1,900 years on this subject. It's possible that if we can get the apostle to speak on the subject of integration of two Mennonite bodies, he might ask, "Who are the Mennonites?" and suggest that we go a bit further and seek unity with the entire body of Christ.—*Wayne D. Lawton, Elizabethtown, Pa.*

Cover photo
by David Hiebert

Preparation for death is not a factor in how we die but in how we live.

Join me on God's death row

by Michael B. Ross

Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come.—Mark 13:33 (New American Bible)

This section of Mark describes the second coming of Christ, a time of great tribulation when heaven and earth will disappear. "Then all mankind will see me, the Messiah, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And I will send out the angels to gather together my chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest bounds of earth and heaven" (Mark 13:26-27, Living Bible).

The second coming of Christ will be a glorious time. But are you prepared for this meeting with Christ? Are you prepared to stand before God to give an account of your life? Are you ready, especially if death should strike suddenly? Are you living on God's death row?

I'm sure you have been told at one time or another that all of us, in a sense, live on death row. Humans are mortal. Death is inevitable. As such, death is life's most powerful enemy, for no matter who we are—no matter how wealthy, no matter how powerful, no matter how blessed—we all will eventually succumb to death. And instinctively, each of us resists death with every fiber of our being. This is completely natural and to be expected.

But are you prepared for death? Have you thought about that day when there are no more tomorrows? Many of us have not. That is because many of us fear death. It is a difficult topic. Many of us try to ignore its possibility. Many of us try to deny its power, its inevitability, its existence. Thus when it does come, usually unexpectedly, we are unprepared.

I live on death row. Not the same death row preachers will tell you that you live on. Mine is more concrete, more immediate. I will be executed by the state of Connecticut. I will know, to within a few minutes, the exact day and time I will die. I will know the exact day and time I will meet Christ. And while I expect it may sound strange to you, to me this has been a great blessing.

I have been forced to face my own mortality. I have been blessed with enough time to try to set things right and make my peace with God. I have been given enough time to ask and seek forgiveness from those I have hurt. I have been given time to heal my own hurts and forgive those who have hurt me. I have been given time to seek reconciliation—with those I have hurt, with those who have hurt me, with myself and with God. I know my time is coming, and I've been given time to prepare for my meeting with Christ. It is a blessing few are fortunate enough to experience.

The greatest of unknowns: Don't misunderstand me. I don't look forward to my execution. I don't welcome death. I have my concerns and fears about death, as I expect we all do. We all fear the unknown—and death is undoubtedly the greatest of unknowns. And I pray daily that some miracle will come to pass that will deliver me from this man-made death row and spare me from the hands of a human executioner. I would like a second chance at life—anyone in my situation would. However, should I not get that chance, then I am at least fortunate enough to have had the time to prepare for my death.

I read about an elder at a Bruderhof (a Christian community based on Hutterite teachings) who was dying from pancreatic cancer. He wrote some wonderful words that I take great comfort in—words I have made into a personal prayer, great words that I try to live by:

"My future is uncertain. The joy is knowing that it is completely in God's hands. All I have to do is thank him. If I have not much longer to live, then that is God's will, and it should mean something. My task is to find out what it means. I have no complaints, only thanks! If it is God's pleasure to give me a chance to start over again, that's wonderful. If it is not his pleasure and he has other tasks for me, I accept that. Faith doesn't depend upon me having my way; faith depends on God having his way. This must be my highest joy and delight. Otherwise how can I pray, 'Thy will be done'?"

Few of us will have the blessing I have been granted of knowing the hour of our death. But each of us must still face our own mortality. Each of us must prepare for our death. The question is, How do we do that?

This may sound ironic, and it is perhaps

Few of us will have the blessing I have been granted of knowing the hour of our death. But each of us must still face our own mortality. Each of us must prepare for our death. The question is, How do we do that?

Religious News Service photo

life's greatest paradox, that preparation for death is not a factor in how we die but in how we live. It is the great promise of Christ that as we live, so shall we die. To live for Christ means that we must be prepared to die daily—every single day of our lives. For if we are prepared to die daily for Christ, we will receive eternal life and our promised salvation. Confused? You shouldn't be.

To truly prepare for death, we must live each day as if it is our last. And we must live that day for Christ. This is not as easy as it sounds, for it is easy to get distracted and count on tomorrow always being there. But we cannot allow ourselves to get distracted and must not count on tomorrow. We must remember our mortality and our purpose for being. As the Indian mystic Sundar Singh said: "Only during the few years of this life are we given the privilege of serving each other and Christ. We shall have heaven forever, but have only a short time for service here, and therefore must not waste the opportunity." We must remember these words, for these words tell us to live each day as if it were our last. These words tell us not to waste the few glorious opportunities we have to live for Christ.

This is easier for me to do than it is for most people. I have the specter of death hanging over my head daily. I will meet Christ soon—I know that every morning when I wake up. I know that I have few opportunities left to serve Christ here in this world. So I try hard not to count on tomorrow, for I have few tomorrows left.

Lost opportunities: I didn't always live like this. Twenty years ago I was a young man heading off to an Ivy League college. Like most people that age I didn't think of my mortality. In many ways I believed that I was immortal—I always assumed that tomorrow would always be there. Now I sit alone here in this cell and look back on those youthful days with great anguish. Today, now that it is too late, I see all the lost opportunities of yesterday. I see all the things that I could have done or should have done, things I didn't do because I figured I would always get to it tomorrow. It is a terrible feeling of a wasted life. It is a terrible feeling that I pray you will never experience. And it is an experience you don't have to experience.

Don't count on tomorrow. Cherish and live each day as if it were your last. Live the life God has given to you to its fullest potential. And live each day God has given you for his glory. Don't forget the words of Jesus, to follow the greatest of God's commandments: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. … Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37,39, Living Bible). Not just sometimes. Not just when you have the time and it is convenient. But every day. For your next encounter with your neighbor may be your last. Seek forgiveness and forgive those who have hurt you. Not tomorrow but today. Make your peace with God for your past transgressions and live each day to further his glory. Now, right this minute, for tomorrow may never come. And if you live each day as if it were your last, then you need not worry about your death, for you will be truly prepared for that day when it does come, even if it comes unexpectedly.

I live on death row and I invite you to join me. Not here on Connecticut's death row (there are too many of us here already) but on God's death row. For when you live on God's death row, you live for God as he wants, for his glory, every day. And while you may not be fortunate enough to know when your death is at hand, you will be prepared.

If you accept my invitation to live on God's death row, join me in a prayer from The Way of the Cross, a prayer from the Catholic liturgy that has much meaning for me:

"My Lord Jesus, you laid your life down for me. I shall lay down my life for you. I offer you my death with all the pain that may surround it, accepting at this moment whatever kind of death you have in store for me. I give you my life and my death, my body and soul, my whole being now and forever."

To truly prepare for death, we must live each day as if it is our last. And we must live that day for Christ.

Michael B. Ross is a condemned man on Connecticut's death row. He has been on death row since June 1987. He is currently under a stay of execution pending the resolution of the appeals process.

Dare I walk in the light

by Barbara Esch Shisler

An apocryphal story is told about the apostle Peter, who was filled with power after the resurrection of Jesus. He saw a blind beggar crouching in the dust at the gate of Jerusalem and, moved with compassion, Peter hurried to him, put his hands on the man's eyes and said, "In the name of the resurrected Christ, your sight is restored."

The beggar leaped to his feet, his eyes open and healed. But his face contorted with rage. He screamed at Peter, "You fool! You have destroyed my way of making a living."

And with one swift, violent motion, the beggar dug his thumbs into his eyes, gouging them out, and fell back into darkness.

God is light. If we walk in that light, we are assured of healthy relationships, forgiveness, self-understanding, and freedom from sin and guilt. But do we dare give up the advantages of self-deception, familiar grievances, favorite sins, the comforts of darkness?

Once I stood with a group of others high on a hill to watch the sun come up. We all waited silently, facing the east. Someone tapped a drum. When the first red ray broke over the horizon, my heart raced. The ball of fire seemed to explode into the sky. The incredible fact of the sun shook me as never before.

Light. The energy, illumination, glory. God's light. The radiance, truth, healing. "In God there is no darkness at all," says 1 John 1:5. Pure light. And if we walk in that light, we will be in loving relationship with God, others and ourselves.

To throw off the blinders of self-deception and face God's truth about myself is a risky act. To live open to God's revelation to me is as wonderful as it is risky. The light reveals love. I cannot know God's love until I open my heart to God's light.

I need to grow in light that illuminates human relationships. "Direct address" is a term coming out of counseling work. It means having the courage to disclose to another who we are, as well as acknowledging the truth and value of another in the midst of conflicting views.

On Mother's Day one year, I wrote notes to my three adult children to tell them that anything from the past was open for discussion. There are dark corners in the house of our family life, as I suppose there are in most, but I wanted the light of honesty and forgiveness to break in.

Most of us easily confess that we are sinners. But to specifically confess how we have hurt another, and ask for forgiveness, is not easy. We find ways to get around it. But it is not our goodness and triumphs that bring us close to each other. It is confession of our failures and regrets. Here is opportunity for growing in human intimacy.

Once I told a trusted friend about one of my despicable sins. She didn't gasp or turn pale or reject me. She became my priest, a stand-in for Christ, assuring me of God's grace and forgiveness. What would happen if Sunday morning sharing time became a place of genuine confession of our sins instead of a litany of the physical needs we face? I suspect we would increase in acceptance and tolerance for each other and a deeper love.

What would happen if Sunday morning sharing time became a place of genuine confession of our sins instead of a litany of the physical needs we face? I suspect we would increase in acceptance and tolerance for each other and a deeper love.

Walking in the light of God helps me examine myself in a healthy way. Meditation and prayer, journal writing, silence and solitude reveal things to me that need to be changed. I need to ask searching questions of myself and be willing to deal with the answers. Self-revelation instead of self-deception brings an exhilarating freedom and impetus to growth.

I once used John 8:32 as a promise that if I could just figure out why I had a particular problem, it would go away: "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." But it didn't work so easily. I was angry and disappointed. Finally I understood that knowing the truth is much more than getting the facts in my head. Knowing the truth needs to happen deep in my heart and imagination so that my feelings and behavior begin to change.

"Do I dare, and do I dare?" J. Alfred Prufrock, in T.S. Eliot's poem, asked if he dared to disturb the universe. Did he dare to be fully alive instead of scuttling in the dark at the bottom of the sea?

Do I dare to walk in God's magnificent light? To let others know who I am, to speak truth in love, to confess my sins, to look honestly at myself and deal with what I find?

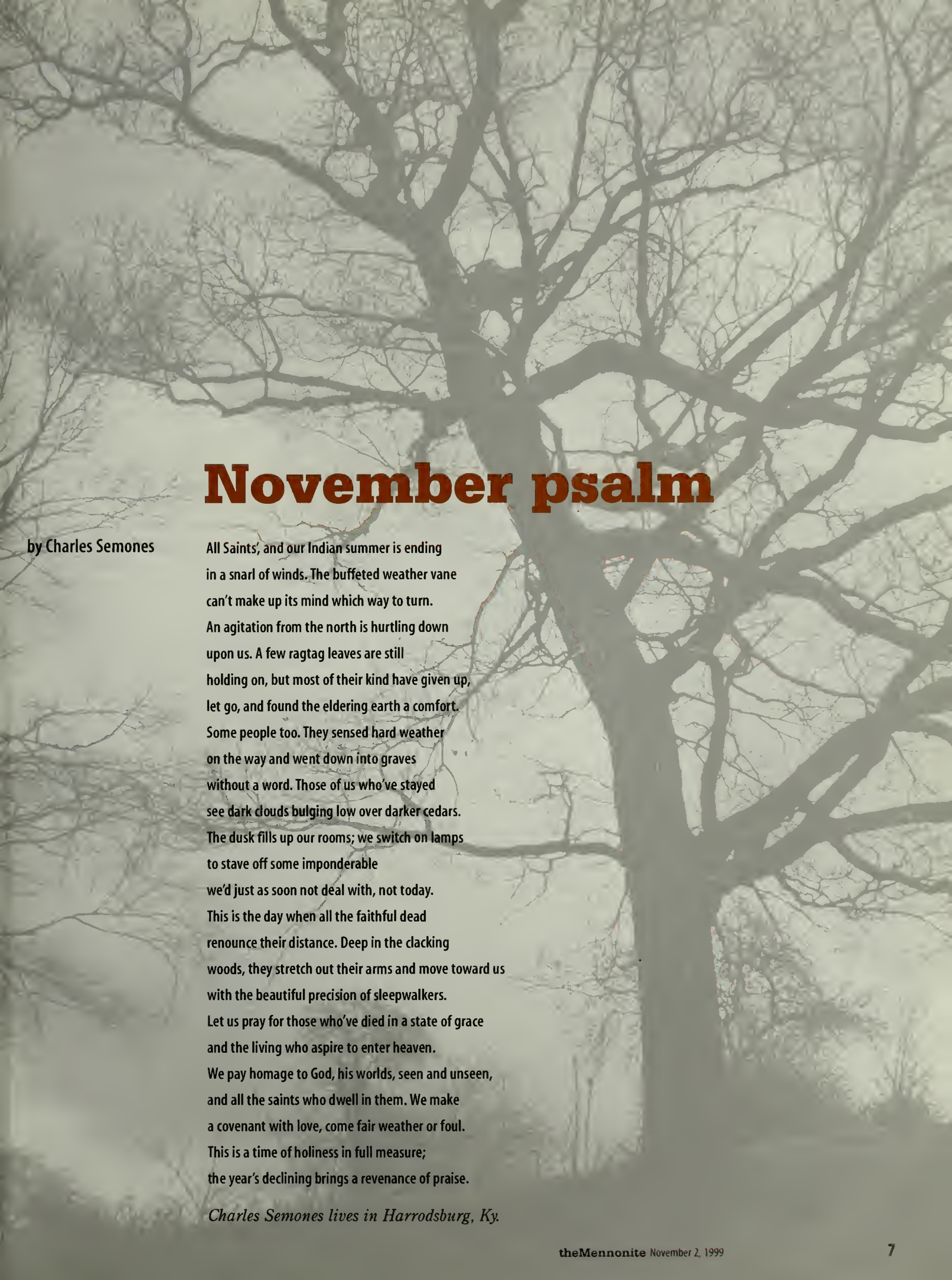
Or like the blind beggar, am I too threatened by light, and is the clutch of dark comfort and security too precious?

I remember watching that sunrise on a hill with a heart filled with "Yes!"

God's light is for me. I will learn to walk in it.

Barbara Esch Shisler lives in Telford, Pa.

Correction: The photo on page 6 in the Oct. 12 issue is by Sheila Snyder. We regret the error.



November psalm

by Charles Semones

All Saints', and our Indian summer is ending
in a snarl of winds. The buffeted weather vane
can't make up its mind which way to turn.
An agitation from the north is hurtling down
upon us. A few ragtag leaves are still
holding on, but most of their kind have given up,
let go, and found the eldering earth a comfort.
Some people too. They sensed hard weather
on the way and went down into graves
without a word. Those of us who've stayed
see dark clouds bulging low over darker cedars.
The dusk fills up our rooms; we switch on lamps
to stave off some imponderable
we'd just as soon not deal with, not today.
This is the day when all the faithful dead
renounce their distance. Deep in the clacking
woods, they stretch out their arms and move toward us
with the beautiful precision of sleepwalkers.
Let us pray for those who've died in a state of grace
and the living who aspire to enter heaven.
We pay homage to God, his worlds, seen and unseen,
and all the saints who dwell in them. We make
a covenant with love, come fair weather or foul.
This is a time of holiness in full measure;
the year's declining brings a revenance of praise.

Charles Semones lives in Harrodsburg, Ky.

Lancaster to grant credentials for women ministers but reaffirms male headship in church structures

LANCASTER, Pa.—Some thought it went too far, others thought it didn't go far enough. But most Lancaster Conference voters found acceptable a plan permitting women to be credentialed to serve in the pulpit and all other ministries except lead pastor and bishop.

With a 69 percent vote, active credentialed people in the conference approved a recommendation to "affirm the expression of all gifts," regardless of gender. The action allows licensing women for specific ministries, such as serving on congregational pastoral teams, for church planting and for missionary work. The resolution goes on to affirm "male leadership in congregational (lead pastor) and conference (bishop) oversight," thereby reserving ordination for men.

The recommendation, brought by the Lancaster Bishop Board, also places a five-year moratorium on discussion of women in leadership at the conference level, although districts and congregations are encouraged to continue discernment.

Ballots were sent to 515 credentialed people in September; 393 were returned. A two-thirds vote was needed to adopt the recommendation. Results were released on Oct. 25.

Lancaster previously licensed women only as chaplains and deaconesses, the latter generally for responsibilities such as visitation. About 15 women hold such credentials. Credentials for pulpit ministry had been denied, although uncredentialed women serve on pastoral teams in some congregations. At least three Lancaster congregations have women as lead pastors. Two of them serve with no credentials, and one has credentials with another area conference.

Opposition to the recommendation came from opposite ends of the theological spectrum, says Joanne Dietzel, conference administrative coordinator. On one side, people voted against it because it did not allow women equal ministerial status with men. "Other persons could not affirm because of their belief in what Scripture says about women not being involved in leadership," Dietzel says.

In a letter to all credentialed people in the conference, Lancaster moderator Ervin Stutzman noted that many districts strongly supported the recommendation—eight of them unanimously—while in a few districts, a majority of leaders did not affirm the resolution.

Given the level of disagreement on the issue, some conference leaders see the recommendation's passage as a mediating action. "It's been quite a struggle for the conference to work through," says Joe Garber, pastor of Byerland Mennonite Church of Willow Street, Pa.

He says the recommendation rectifies "a male-dominated church-leadership structure" and now hopes Lancaster can move on to other work. "[The recommendation] lifted up the principle of [male] headship that's in the Scriptures along with utilizing gifts," Garber says. "I hope it helps solidify what Scripture seems to be saying."

Others hope the recommendation is a first step. Sam Thomas, pastor of Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church, supports women in leadership at all levels of the church. Even though the recommendation did not go that far, he says he voted for it because anything more would not have been accepted now by a majority of conference leaders.

"I just knew that we could not practically get the ideal," Thomas says. "This statement did allow us at a very practical level to make some movement.

"My hope is … we can feel safe with women in leadership. We need a block of time here to settle into those opportunities."

Ruth Wenger, the uncredentialed lead pastor of North Bronx Mennonite Church in Bronx, N.Y., said: "I mourn what seems to be society's way of structuring itself according to the anatomy of human beings. I'm gratified that the Bishop Board was willing to make a move in the right direction."

But elsewhere, the resolution's passage was met with disappointment. "There was a significant number of leadership people who were willing to redefine or disregard what I would consider principles of Scripture … and instead go along with the whims of culture and society," says Delmar Sauder, pastor at Paradise (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

As a result, Sauder and others say some congregations could decide to withdraw from the conference.

The issue of women in leadership has risen to prominence in Lancaster over the past several years as requests for credentials for women increased. Dietzel said the Bishop Board received at least four in the last year.—*Rich Preheim*

My hope is … we can feel safe with women in leadership. We need a block of time here to settle into those opportunities.

—*Sam Thomas*

There was a significant number of leadership people who were willing to redefine or disregard … Scripture.

—*Delmar Sauder*

Montreal Mennonites' future is French

Grant bolsters efforts to start French-speaking church

MONTREAL—Eight years ago, Michel Monette was selling encyclopedias when he was sold on God.

Monette, who grew up nominally Catholic, was on the road with a Christian co-worker, staying in the same motel room. "I said to [him], 'Your God is different from mine. If you're a good salesman, you'll sell me God,'" Monette recalls.

His co-worker must have been a good salesman, because Monette and his wife, Lyne, became Christians. Now the Montreal couple are hoping to bring others to Christ. Next year they will relocate in the city to begin a cell group as part of a church-planting effort being partially funded by the City on a Hill program of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

The City on a Hill program each year provides a grant of $25,000 plus CHM staff consultation time for urban church development in a selected city. Montreal is the 1999 recipient.

The proposed congregation will be cell-based, multiethnic and French-speaking. French is the official language for Montreal, which has a population of 3 million, and the city has seen significant numbers of French-speaking immigrants, mostly from Haiti.

"The future [for Mennonites in Quebec] is French," says Richard Lougheed, a former United Church of Canada minister who is now chair of the Conseil Mennonite Quèbècois (CMQ), a group of Anabaptist church leaders from the province.

What is now the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada began church planting in Quebec in the late 1950s. Only three French-speaking MCEC-affiliated congregations remain, none of them in Montreal. The one Mennonite congregation within the city, Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, is English-speaking.

There are nine Mennonite Brethren congregations in Quebec, two of them in Montreal. All of them are French-speaking.

"My studies have convinced me that there's no future for a French Protestant church in Quebec that's not self-supporting," says Lougheed, a professor of Old Testament and church history. "One hundred fifty years of English [missionary] money has not produced stability in the [French-speaking] church."

The church planting will be directed by CMQ coordinator Daniel Genest. As a teenager, he was a drug user and dealer and robbed homes. But at age 19, he became Christian, eventually finding his way into Mennonite circles, serving as a Mennonite Brethren and MCEC pastor before creating CMQ in 1995.

"We can't think of church growth without proclamation," Genest says. "It can't be the traditional, low-profile social action, although there has to be a balance."

Church membership and attendance among mainline Protestants as well as Catholics has been declining in recent years—a trend the new congregation will have to buck.

"We were musing about a name," Lougheed says. "We didn't want it to include 'church,' 'Christian,' 'Anabaptist' or 'Mennonite'—nothing [confusing or] easily identifiable with organized and institutional religion."

So the new body will be called Communautè de Rèconciliation—Community of Reconciliation.

"The concept of reconciliation has real potential," Lougheed says. "At the moment, no church is having any impact on the French-speaking population here.

"We're convinced that once you do break through, a lot of people will be interested in the Anabaptist model."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Diversity hallmark of Montreal church

In the middle of a predominantly Catholic city is a small Mennonite congregation whose participants come from Anglican, Pentecostal, United Church of Canada and other religious backgrounds.

"At times I think we are an ecumenical church with a Mennonite foundation," says Laura Loewen, pastor of Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal.

The 43-member group, the only English-speaking Mennonite congregation in the city, reflects geographic as well as religious diversity. "Some come to Montreal as students, but not nearly all," Loewen says. "We have people from other provinces, the United States and overseas, including Burundi, Nigeria and Iran."

The congregation will receive funds from the Commission on Home Ministries' City on a Hill project, which supports urban church development. The congregation will use the money to add a sign outside its meeting place. Funds will also go to a Mennonite-affiliated refugee and immigration agency in Montreal. —*GCMC News Service*

Mary E. Klassen

Thankfully working

Enticed by the promise of a Thanksgiving meal, Mary Hurst of Ephrata, Pa., a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., gets down and dirty to plant shrubs in the middle of the AMBS campus on Oct. 11. No classes were held that day in observance of Canadian Thanksgiving. Seminary administrators offered a Thanksgiving dinner for those who would spend the day helping with campus projects. Ninety shrubs and more than 100 perennial bulbs were planted, and more than 100 students, faculty and staff came to the evening meal on campus. The meal was followed by a fund-raiser to assist an international student at AMBS who has a hearing-impaired infant son.

Clock restorations mark passage of time

Russian Mennonite-made clocks endure as era artifacts

MEDA photo

I've got clocks around the clock.

—Arthur Kroeger

WINNIPEG—They started coming in 1874, from the steppes of Russia to the central plains of the United States and Canada. By the time the tide of immigration subsided in the 1920s, some 40,000 Mennonites had crossed the Atlantic. Hundreds lugged a particularly precious cargo: a wall clock with bulky pendulum and heavy brass weights.

Of all the output generated by Mennonite business activity in Russia, the clock stands out as an economic artifact, marking much more than the strides of time.

Today, decades after the clock manufacturers closed their doors, Russian Mennonite clocks are prized as heirlooms and sought after by collectors. The clocks' creators had names such as Lepp, Hamm, Mandtler and Hildebrand. But the one that started it all and endured the longest was Kroeger. Of the 10,000 to 12,000 clocks made by Mennonites in Russia, 80 percent were estimated to be by Kroeger.

A Kroeger clock had primitive simplicity: a large metal wall clock with long brass pendulum and driven by brass weights on a string. No frills; no fancy cabinet or glass case. Just a well-crafted clock for simple Mennonite farmsteads of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Arthur Kroeger of Winnipeg is the grandson of the last Kroeger clockmaker in Russia and the last one with a passion for clocks. His hobby these days is writing it all down for future generations.

In 1803, Kroeger's ancestor, master clockmaker Johann Krueger, immigrated from Prussia to the Chortitza Colony in Russia, where Mennonites had begun settling in 1789.

"Clockmaking was a good business at that time," Kroeger says. "The surrounding farm communities prospered. Other Mennonite colonies had been established, and the Kroegers supplied them all with clocks."

The clocks had a reputation for being well-made and inexpensive. Eventually the market became saturated, and modernity set in. By the 1900s, business began to dwindle. Other clockmakers reinvented themselves, using their mechanical skills to produce threshing machines, horse rakes and reapers. No new Kroeger clocks were made after 1930.

Arthur Kroeger, a native of Russia, immigrated to Canada via Germany in 1949. He got work in a metal shop when he came to Winnipeg and later moved into drafting and engineering. Kroeger met Mennonite industrialist J.J. Klassen, who had worked for Kroeger's grandfather in Russia.

"He knew there were quite a few Kroeger clocks in Canada and told me I should get involved with clocks because people would be coming to me for repairs and restoration," Kroeger says. "He was right."

Restorations have kept him busy. Over the years Kroeger has done about 80 of them. "I've got clocks around the clock," he says.

For Kroeger, clocks are not only a rewarding hobby but also a treasured link with his past. As with many Russian Mennonites, it is a past filled with tragedy. Kroeger's grandfather David, the last Kroeger to make a living at clocks, was beaten to death by anarchists.

In 1990 a clock came into Kroeger's Winnipeg shop for repair. When he examined the mechanism he made a startling discovery. Inside were scratched the initials of his father, who would have been 16 when he worked on this particular clock. He died in a Soviet concentration camp in 1942.

Kroeger estimates there are still a few hundred Kroeger clocks in homes in Canada, the United States and Latin America. More may still exist in the former Soviet Union.

Ask him what they are worth today, and Kroeger smiles mischievously. He doesn't like to speculate. Collectors don't want him to disrupt the market. Besides, much of a clock's value is in the eye of the beholder.

Says Kroeger, "Let's just say some of them in top condition have fetched a good price."

—Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service

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Guatemalan education center ends second term

ALTA VERAPAZ, Guatemala—Forty-five students in October completed the second term offered by Bezalel Student Center, a Mennonite education center in western Guatemala. The center, serving the native K'ekchi' population, offers basic education, Bible and technical skills to young adults and church leaders.

Bezalel began its first term of courses in February with 32 students. One of those students was 17-year-old Rolando Crucal Rax, who began studies at the fourth-grade level.

"I can finish a grade a month," he says. "My teacher explains everything very well, and I find it easy to learn."—*EMM News Service*

Chechen refugees to get MCC material aid

EPHRATA, Pa.—Refugees fleeing Chechnya, where Russian troops are battling Chechen separatist forces, will be receiving material assistance from Mennonite Central Committee. MCC will ship $136,000 worth of shoes, health kits, bandages, used clothing, comforters, soap and milk powder.

"Refugees are streaming to the borders of Chechnya, trying to get to neighboring Russian territories, which don't exactly want them," says Steve Hochstetler Shirk, MCC's co-representative in the former Soviet Union. "Everyone is afraid of terrorism, and anti-Chechen feelings are running high."—*MCC News Service*

Goshen starts campaign for new music building

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College has launched a $5.7 million campaign to complete a new campus music building. More than $16.3 million has been raised for the $22 million project, which includes construction, equipment, contingency funds and endowment.

The proposed building will include a 1,000-seat concert hall, a small recital hall with an organ, rehearsal halls, 26 practice rooms, 12 faculty teaching studios, four music classrooms, piano studios, computer lab and music library.

Bluffton gets federal grant for technology

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College will step up its use of technology in education, thanks to $1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The five-year grant will help equip all classrooms in the new Centennial Hall with state-of-the-art instructional technology.

The grant will also fund the creation of student-faculty teams that will learn technology skills together. Participants will receive portable computers, and the teams will develop projects related to their academic programs that require technological skills to support research, problem solving and public presentation.

by the way ...

The first Mennonite connection with Hispanics in the United States came in 1916 when Simon del Bosque, a Mexican, began participating in an English-speaking Mennonite congregation in Tuleta, Texas.—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*

Jim Bishop

The hole goal

Eastern Mennonite University student Drew Roynon moves a tray of glazed doughnuts at last month's Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale in Harrisonburg. Roynon, a freshman from Archbold, Ohio, was one of a group of students from the Harrisonburg school that helped make 15,000 doughnuts. The sale raised $188,000 for Mennonite Central Committee.

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Births

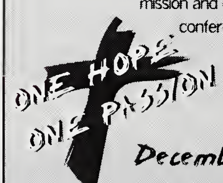
Alderfer, Luke Michael, Oct. 8 to Michael and Rachelle (Gahman) Alderfer, Harleysville, Pa.
Alderfer, Zachary Ryan, Oct. 4, to David and Jennifer Alderfer, Allentown, Pa.
Amstutz, Sophia Lorraine, Sept. 22, to Douglas and Wanda Roth Amstutz, Scottdale, Pa.
Detweiler, Katherine Marie, Oct. 11, to Kelly (Benner) and Ray Detweiler, Perkasie, Pa.
Hershey, Liam Alexander, Sept. 11, to Fred and Maureen (Tasker) Hershey, Maytown, Pa.
Hess, Connor Colby, Sept. 24, to Nicole and Ryan Hess, Lancaster, Pa.
Kauffman, Noah Zachary, Oct. 14, to Ramona and Troy Kauffman, Osceola, Ind.
Kirkwood, Jenna Lynn, Sept. 21, to David and Rita (Zehr) Kirkwood, Bloomington, Ill.
Litwiller, Jordan Carl, Oct. 8, to Larry and Nelda (Rempel) Litwiller, Hesston, Kan.
Miller, Evan Scott, Oct. 8, to Pamela (Nyce) and Scott Miller, Telford, Pa.
Miller, Jessalyn Noel, Oct. 2, to Janelle (Hilty) and Robert Miller, Elkhart, Ind.
Ott, Kyle Burke, Oct. 8, to Glen and Tammy (Burke) Ott, Henderson, Neb.
Ropp, Rachel Victoria, Sept. 29, to Dennis and Heather (McLaughlin) Ropp, Tavistock, Ont.
Roth, Taylor Marie, Oct. 4, to Gary and Nancy (Reif) Roth, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.
Schlabach, Autumn Renae and Avery Rose (twins), Sept. 30, to Jeff and Sheryl (Widmer) Schlabach, Kalona, Iowa.
Schneider, Jesse Alexander, Aug. 23, to Julie (Slates) and Randall Lee Schneider, Dover, Ohio.
Schneider, Logan Mark, Sept. 21, to Stacy Angel and William Mark Schneider, Strasburg, Ohio.
Smucker, Tristan Paul Clemens, Oct. 2, to Judy and Steve Clemens Smucker, Telford, Pa.
Steinhauer, Thomas Austin II, Oct. 10, to Tom and Trista (Pike) Steinhauer, Quarryville, Pa.
Waidelich, Nicholas Lee, Oct. 10, to Lori (Thompson) and Tom Waidelich, Archbold, Ohio.
Widmer, Sadie Quinn, Oct. 7, to Marcia (Evers) and Todd Widmer, Iowa City, Iowa.
Yoder, Brayden Reece, Oct. 9, to Darren and Debra (Metzler) Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Marriages

Boehr/Magee: Thomas Boehr, Bluffton, Ohio, and Julie Ann Magee, Sept. 18 at St. Anthony's Church, Saranac, Mich.
Cressman/Schmidt: James Cressman, Kitchener, Ont., and Rachel Schmidt, Goessel, Kan., Oct. 2 at Waterloo (Ont.) North Mennonite Church.
Flores/Schmidt: Gilberto Flores, Hesston, Kan., and Alison Schmidt, Walton, Kan., Sept. 11 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.
Grassmyer/Sharp: Kristen Grassmyer, Belleville, Pa., and Troy Sharp, Belleville, Oct. 2.
Heddin/McAllister: Jeff Heddin, Newton, Kan., and Janice McAllister, Newton, Sept. 25 at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
Hostetter/Miller: Susan Hostetter, Lancaster, Pa., and Leon Miller, Virginia Beach, Va., Oct. 2 at Parkesburg, Pa.
Janzen/Rediger: Michelle Rose Janzen, Hesston, Kan., and Thomas Jay Rediger, Hesston, Oct. 9 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.
King/O'Keefe: Kimberly King, Kouts, Ind., and Jeff Mike O'Keefe, Oct. 2 at Kouts.
Lawrence/Loepp: Jackie Lawrence, Moline, Ill., and LeRoy Loepp, Normal, Ill., Oct. 9 at Mennonite Church of Normal.
Lynch/Rust: Jeff Lynch, Kouts, Ind., and Melinda Rust, Kouts, Sept. 25 at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts.
Mast/Stutzman: Michele Mast, Goshen, Ind., and Michael Stutzman, Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 16 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Miller/Pressler: Sondra Miller, Millersburg, Ind., and Dan Pressler, Millersburg, Oct. 9 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.
Miller/Witmer: Rick Miller, LaGrange, Ind., and Dawn Witmer, Goshen, Ind., Oct. 16 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.
Potter/Thornburg: Brad Potter, Hesston, Kan., and Tina Thornburg, Hesston, Oct. 15 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.

Deaths

Basinger, Amelia, 90, Bluffton, Ohio, died Oct. 4. Parents: Daniel and Elizabeth Bixel Basinger (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 9 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
Buzzard, Nellie Nusbaum, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 29. Spouse: Joe Buzzard. Parents: Daniel and Vinnie Mack Nusbaum (deceased). Other survivors: children Gerald, Eileen Roth; three grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 2 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Hartzler, Harold, 65, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 6 of a heart attack. Spouse: Rachel Nafziger Hartzler. Parents: Harold and Dorothy Baker Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Jody Noble, Lea Ann Rand, Carrie, Dori, Joel, Mark, Aaron Jon; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 10 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Kauffman, Glenn D., 74, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 3. Spouse: Ruth Byler Kauffman. Parents: Alden and Sadie Hartzler Kauffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Donna Peachey, Helen Brubaker, Robert; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct 6 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.



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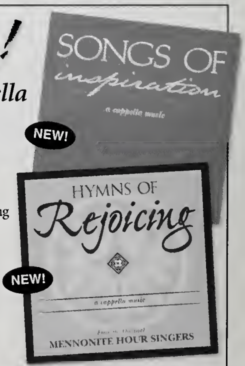

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Mast, Amanda, 87, Honey Brook, Pa., died Sept. 26. Spouse: John Mast (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Catherine Baer Miller (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Albert, Esther Kniss, Edna Good, Ida Swartley, Ruth Ann Otto, Naomi Sensenig, Selena Horning. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Tel Hai Chapel, Honey Brook.

Miller, Forrest, 91, Louisville, Ohio, died Sept. 23. Spouse: Blanche Miller. Parents: Samuel and Mary Goldschmidt Miller (deceased). Other survivors: Marilyn Schneider, Lowell; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 25 at Stoner Heights Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Oswald, Levi, 88, Orrville, Ohio, died Oct. 8. Spouse: Ruby Mast Oswald (deceased). Parents: Emanuel and Sara Miller Oswald (deceased). Survivors: children Lowell, Harold, Gary, Robert; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 11 at Smithville, Ohio.

Roth, Ray, 78, Olds, Iowa, died Sept. 30. Spouse: Edna Roth. Parents: Joseph and Fannie Gerig Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children Fred, Larry, Lynn, Lamar, Reynolds; 12 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Schlegel, Mary Eicher, 99, Milford, Neb., died Oct. 5. Spouse: Ira Schlegel (deceased) Parents: Dan and Magelena Stutzman Eicher (deceased). Survivors: children James, Vernetta Kenney, Margaret Eberspacher; 22 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Yoder, Oren, 86, Wellman, Iowa, died Sept. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Mary Kate Blosser Yoder. Parents: Abner and Mary Gingerich Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Arlin, Eldon, Aldeen Wenger, Darvin; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 25 at Parnell, Iowa.

Zook, Alphie, 74, Harrisonburg, Va., died Oct. 11. Spouse: Mary Brubaker Zook. Parents: Uriel and Catherine Zook (deceased). Other survivors: children Leander, Ethan, Darrell; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Zook, Jonas, 91, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 3. Spouse: Mary Spicher Zook (deceased). Parents: Israel and Katie Yoder Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Yoder, Katie Coblentz, Sadie Kennel, Wilmer; 12 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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- **Schubert Mennonite Church**, a small, growing rural community church, eastern Pa., seeks ***assistant/lead pastor***. Up to half-time support. Inquire: Marlin Zimmerman, 708 E. Linden St., Richland, PA 17087-9714; 717-866-5323; email zimmb@ptd.net

- **Richmond Mennonite Fellowship**, a small congregation of 18 families in Richmond, Va., seeks a part-time ***pastor***. Emphases will be on planning and leading worship, and preaching. Send resume to Search Team, 7612 Wanymala Rd., Richmond, VA 23229.

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** seeks ***family and consumer science teacher***. Position opens Nov. 22, 1999. Please contact Miles Yoder at Lancaster Mennonite High School, 2176 Lincoln Highway E., Lancaster, PA 17602; 717-299-0436; email myodes@juno.com

- **Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship**, a small, urban, mission-oriented Anabaptist church committed to living the gospel in New York City, seeks a half-time ***pastor***. Inquire: Kathleen Birkey, 324 E. 61st St. Apt. 5RW, New York, NY 10021; 212-702-8698; email fellowship@mennohouse.com; website www.mennohouse.com

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- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***desktop computer specialist***. 12-month, full-time. Bachelor's degree in computer science or related field, or equivalent experience required. For more information, view our website: www.emu.edu. Application deadline: Nov. 15, 1999. EMU Human Resources, 540-432-4108; restoa@emu.edu

- **Mennonite Home of Albany** seeks ***executive director***. "A Christ-centered community providing life-enriching services," Mennonite Home of Albany is a 52-year-old CCRC with a reputation for faith-based, quality housing and services. Our 300 staff serve over 500 residents on our 90-acre campus and in the community. Seeking an experienced health-care and/or housing executive to provide leadership as we move from a focus on health care to offering enhanced services and housing options for older adults.

  Send resume to Christina Zelazek, human resource director, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus SE, Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; fax 541-917-1399; email chrisz@mennonitehome.com. Resumes accepted through Nov. 10. (Drug screen and criminal check required.)

- **Lititz Mennonite Church** seeks a ***youth/associate pastor*** to focus on ministry to youth and other pastoral responsibilities. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment and general agreement with Anabaptist teachings. The position may be full- or part-time. To inquire further or to send a resume, contact Lititz Mennonite Church, 165 Front St., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-8237; email LMchurch@desupernet.net

- **Hesston College** seeks ***Bible instructor*** to teach biblical studies courses in the general curriculum and Pastoral Ministries Program. Desired qualities: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to the Mennonite church. Master's degree minimum. Teaching and pastoral experience preferred. Full-time position available August 2000. Application review begins Jan. 10, 2000.

  Send resume and references to Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8206 or email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Bluffton College** music department seeks a full-time ***director of choral activities***. Tenure-track position beginning fall 2000. Candidate must have doctorate (or be near completion) in choral conducting and demonstrated excellence in college-level teaching. Elementary music teaching experience is desirable. Ability to teach undergraduate courses in applied voice, choral methods/literature, choral conducting and related areas, and to provide leadership for a choral program that includes two college concert choirs, two college/community oratorio choirs, and small ensembles. Direct Camerata Singers, a select touring chamber choir.

  For further information see http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications will begin Dec. 1, 1999, and continue until the position is filled. Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta** seeks a full-time ***director for Camp Valaqua*** near Calgary, starting in February 2000. Responsibilities include supervision and direction of camp programs that nurture the spiritual and emotional understanding and well-being of campers. The director recruits, trains and supervises summer staff and volunteers, and supports their spiritual growth and leadership skill development. The director is responsible for building and maintaining strong camp support in congregations and implementing creative promotional events. Applicants must have a demonstrated Christian faith and a passion for camp ministry. Previous experience in camp leadership, effective communication skills, and organizational and administrative strength are essential. Camp Valaqua is designed to serve 600 campers each summer with 40 staff in a beautiful setting in the foothills of the Rockies.

  Please submit a letter of application with resume and three letters of reference by Nov. 15, 1999, to Harry Pauls, camp committee chairperson, 253-52258 Range Road 231, Sherwood Park, AB T8B 1M7; 780-464-4175; email hpauls@dow.com

- **Eastern Mennonite Universities** has the following openings:

  Communication: MFA or Ph.D. Specialization: cultural studies/media studies background. Seeking a visionary candidate to develop a new major.

  History: Ph.D. required. Specialization: United States history, some area studies and political science.

  Music: Doctorate preferred, master's degree required. Specialization: voice. Competence: choral conducting. Experience with college-level students desirable. Performance experience preferred.

  Social work: MSW required, doctorate preferred. Specialization: human behavior and social environment and five years of social work practice.

  Sociology: MSW and Ph.D. required.

  Theater: MFA required. Two years of college-level teaching desired. Seeking a candidate with creative thinking skills, sensitivity for the community-building aspect of theater and an imaginative vision as the program grows.

  EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin Dec. 1, 1999. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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by Rich Preheim

What are the odds?

An Alabama county and a local dog track are rolling the dice in a lawsuit over the state legislature's defeat of a bill that would have legalized video poker at dog tracks.

The bill was narrowly defeated by the Alabama state legislature in April. The Alabama chapter of the American Family Association (AFA) and other Christian "pro-family" groups that had opposed the bill were named as defendants in the suit, which was filed in state court. Greene County and the dog track are seeking $50 million in compensatory damages and $250 million in punitive damages.

"This lawsuit is the equivalent of Bob Dole suing Bill Clinton because he campaigned against Dole and won the 1996 presidential election," AFA lawyer Stephen M. Crampton said in *AFA Journal.* "This is the scorched earth policy of so many people in politics nowadays. If you have an enemy, take him down using any means necessary."

Campaigning for resolution

Unlike in Montgomery, Ala., one Christian-based political action didn't fare well on Capitol Hill. Rep. Helen Chenoweth, R-Idaho, this summer introduced a resolution "calling for days of prayer, fasting and repentance." The resolution failed to aquire the two-thirds majority needed for passage, receiving 275 votes.

In her address on the floor of the House of Representatives, Chenoweth noted that more than 200 such resolutions were made between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. The time had come for another, she said, due to increasing violence, indifference to suffering, disintegration of nuclear families and "a general moral decay."

"This resolution does not resolve our problems," she said in remarks reprinted in *National Religious Broadcasters* magazine, "but it does move us and focus us to the source from where we should seek our guidance and our national healing."

A world of religion

Religious leaders from across the world hope success breeds success. In 1993, an international, interfaith event called the Parliament of the World's Religions drew 8,000 people to Chicago. Now a second such gathering will be held Dec. 1-8 in Cape Town, South Africa.

Expected Christian participants include theologian Hans Küng from Germany and Catholic theologian Rosemary Radford Reuther of Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston, Ill. Other notables include the Dalai Lama, the president of the World Muslim Congress, the Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia Buddhism and a representative from the International Conference of Christians and Jews.

The parliament is described in a news release as an educational, celebratory and nonlegislative event. But participants will discuss "A Call to Our Guiding Institutions," an invitation for religion, government, business, education, science and other institutions to reassess and redefine their roles in seeking "a just, peaceful and sustainable future."

Sign of the ministerial times

You knew this had to be coming. The Wesleyan Church has appointed longtime administrator and pastor Joe Sawyer as its web site chaplain, reports *The Wesleyan Advocate.* Among his responsibilities will be responding to email messages and counseling via email.

Tidbits

- Kenya is home to the largest group of Quakers in the world, estimated to be between 130,000 and 300,000.—*Christian Living*
- Lack of religious involvement has an effect on mortality equivalent to smoking a pack of cigarettes a day for 40 years, according to a Duke University researcher. —*Context*
- About 4,000 chaplains work in U.S. business settings, mostly part-time or as volunteers.—*The Marketplace*
- George Bush at one time had eight Catholics in his cabinet, one less than the total number of Catholics to hold Cabinet positions between 1789 and 1940. —*National Catholic Reporter*

Y2K watch: Best books on the millennium

You think you're tired of all this Y2K frenzy? Just imagine how Mark Galli feels. As book review editor of *Christianity Today,* he has seen come across his desk a flood of titles with words such as "millennium," "Second Coming," "Y2K" and "end times."

With all that to choose from, Galli has weighed in with his choices for the best books about things millennial. At the top of the list is *The New Millennium Manual: A Once and Future Guide* by Robert G. Clouse, Robern N. Hosack and Richard V. Pierard (Baker).

While the *The New Millennium Manual* outlines millennial views, summarizes the history of apocalypticism and profiles prophetic movements, Galli appreciates the book's entertainment value. In addition to cartoons, photos and sidebars illustrating the often-wacky world of end-times speculation, the first chapter starts by quoting that eminent baseball player and philosopher, Yogi Berra: "The future ain't what it used to be."

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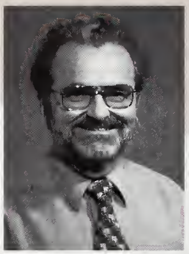

J. Lorne Peachey

An open letter to Jesse Ventura

I am not a reader of *Playboy*. But some people are. And they discovered that in the November 1999 issue you, Jesse, said, "Organized religion is … a crutch for weak-minded people who need strength in numbers."

Now surely you knew that would cause a stir. One of the better reactions, in my opinion, came from Garrison Keillor, who opened an early October edition of his radio show, "A Prairie Home Companion," with the quip: "We don't need to do any humor this week; the governor of Minnesota has taken care of that for us." I doubt, however, that most of those who used you as an example in sermons the past couple of Sundays were as kind.

Doug Amstutz was not one of these. He surprised his congregation, Mennonite Church of Scottdale (Pa.), with this analysis: "Jesse Ventura is right."

You are right because religion is not about people who have it all together, Doug said. The church is for people who know they are weak, who can often be wrong, who need the strength of numbers to live out faith in God.

If we are honest, we have to admit we are more broken than whole, we stumble more than we walk, we need others more than we don't. And this is what the church is about.

Sounds almost like Jesus: "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call sinners to turn from their sins, not to spend my time with those who think they are already good enough" (Luke 5:31-32, NLT).

Those were difficult words for the disciples and religious folk of Jesus' day. They are difficult words for today. All of us—including you, Jesse, for I've read some of what you've said in publications other than *Playboy*—like to think we are whole people. We can go it alone. We can do things for ourselves. But if we are honest, we have to admit we are more broken than whole, we stumble more than we walk, we need others more than we don't.

You too, Jesse. Your staff fell all over you and themselves doing damage control after they realized your statement about religion was eroding your popularity fast. You couldn't do it without them.

Now neither Doug nor I are so naive as to think that his interpretation of what you said is actually what you meant. You did also say that organized religion is "a sham," which leads me to believe that you really were taking pot-shots at the church. But I think we Christians should thank you for your statement anyway.

We should thank you because you did more to call attention to religion and the church than any other person recently. You got many of us thinking: Why is our faith so important? Why are we members of an organized religion, a church? If this means we are weak-minded, is that bad? Or good?

These are appropriate questions for those of us who are part of two small Mennonite groups trying to get our act together to become one. Currently we are in the middle of a study and discussion about what we would like to see our new denomination become—a study we call "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church."

In my own dreaming, I must admit I find myself too tempted to think in terms of efficiency and success for our new church. You know, the same things that also make for a well-run governor's office: slick organization, good goals, a well-thought-through mission statement, charismatic leadership. All good, of course. But they are not what Jesus said he was about on this earth. Nor are they what your *Playboy* interview remarks imply the church should be about, if we put the best light on them.

What the church is about is helping the weak—all of us. It is about helping us grow toward wholeness, so that we can support each other, both to cope with our world and to truly praise the God who created us.

This God, I suspect, has a big smile right now. That smile comes because God can use a derogatory comment to focus attention on the meaning of religion and the church. And this at an especially crucial time for those of us who are North American Mennonites.

Thanks.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Mercy and justice?

As a Mennonite family, we have been struggling the last several years in getting our mentally ill mother into a Mennonite home. Doors have been closed for us first because of a lack of space and, most recently, because she "lacks financial resources." It was painful and frustrating to receive that news from a Mennonite institution that both believes in justice and peacemaking, an institution that is working to help the poor around the world.

It makes us raise these questions: Where have our principles as Christian Mennonites gone? Do those who make the money ultimately make the last call? We understand the dilemmas of finances and do not want to put our burden solely on these institutions. But how can we share the load?

It is hurtful to see our mother in a secular retirement home where her faith is not being nurtured and she is not receiving the care she might get in one of our Anabaptist institutions. It is hard to accept their decision not to take our dear mother. We believe her mental illness contributed to her mismanaging her investments, and today she has not enough to get in. Where do mercy and justice enter the picture with Mennonite people, like our mother, who have given their whole lives to serve the church?—*Frank and Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, Lancaster, Pa.*

The call to leadership

Thank you for printing the stories of Brenda Isaacs and Gayle Gerber Koontz in the Oct. 19 issue. Our church is greatly enriched by hearing how God's call is received by those who serve us as leaders. *She Has Done a Good Thing: Mennonite Women Leaders Tell Their Stories* (the book these stories come from) and another 1999 Herald Press book, *Quiet Shouts: Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders*, are significant books for our time. I encourage *The Mennonite* to continue printing stories of our leaders—women and men, young and old. Faith stories like these connect with everyday life.—*Philip Clemens, Corry, Pa.*

Unity and unification

Who could have imagined that we, with strong residual Anabaptist memory, could spend so much time, effort, dreams and money on unifying organizational structures? We might have looked back to our formative years and seen that the essence of our origins had more to do with joining together with those on the margins of history to be freed from centralized structure rather than consolidating organizational power. Christian faithfulness requires unity, not necessarily unification. They are quite different proposals. Unity is a sense of oneness which includes diversity. Unification usually involves merging common denominators, which includes a tendency to erase diversity.

Worldly globalization forces may push us toward unification. Universalization in the kingdom of God, however, invites us in the direction of practicing cooperation while honoring diversity. From the point of view of those excluded by world economic globalization, ever-larger mergers are worldly and dangerous.

Organizational merging communicates to the world that bigger is better, that working together can best be done when we all have the same name, that differences ought to be forgotten in the interest of efficiency. Cooperating as separate organizations with common goals, on the other hand, communicates that identity is important, that we can best partner when diversity is honored and valued, that smaller geographical units are more sustainable, that the excluded can actually join the movement of the included without being swallowed up. Centralization means concentration of power; localization means empowering the grass roots.

In the past we fought to be pure. Will we now fight to be one? When will we remember that both purity and oneness are gratuitous and are both qualities of our being included in Christ, rather than goals to be won by excluding those who understand inclusion in Christ differently than we do?—*Willis G. Horst, Formosa, Argentina*

Paul's words

I fail to understand how Ervin R. Stutzman's water-treading conversation with the apostle Paul ("Why Integration? A Biblical Perspective," Sept. 28) can further the integration process. On two full pages, Stutzman merely restates what most of us have always known.

What he ignores is significant. It is as if the church assumes it has an infallible understanding of Scripture and therefore dare not re-examine its stance, even when that stance imposes an abusive stigma on homosexual people and their families, thereby causing them to live in closets of shame, humiliation and dignity denied.

As if that isn't enough, it is increasingly clear to some of us that the church suffers from a self-inflicted wound. Many straight peo-

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ay readers say

ple become victims of collateral damage by innocently marrying closeted (or unaware) homosexual people who are merely doing what the church expects them to do.—*Clif Kenagy, Albany, Ore.*

Concern was voiced over Stutzman imagining a conversation in which the apostle Paul says that homosexual activity is sin (Readers Say, Oct. 19). Was Stutzman putting words into Paul's mouth? That concern was more appropriate 10 to 20 years ago. For several decades, people argued that Paul did not address loving, caring homosexual relationships but only abusive or cultic forms of homosexuality. Now the tide is flowing against that view. At St Louis 99, the leader of the seminar on homosexuality gave a list of a dozen scholars writing recently who find that view "flawed and unconvincing." These writers are not just evangelicals; they span the Christian communion.

It's becoming hard to assert that some forms of homosexual activity can be holy unless one also is willing to assert that Paul was not inspired by the Spirit of God when he penned Romans 1.—*Harold Miller, Corning, N.Y.*

Grateful

I am grateful for the testimony and tone of redemption in two articles in the Sept. 28 issue: "Repentance Is an Ongoing Process" by Dorcas Cyster and "Why Integration: A Biblical Perspective" by Ervin R. Stutzman. I thank the Lord for forgiveness where we have failed by yielding to the carnal tendencies and inclination to sin that we are born with as part of our sinful nature. Praise God for deliverances and victories available to us.

I also appreciated Rich Preheim's editorial ("When Amy Meets Peter") in the same issue. —*Glen I. Birky, Detroit Lakes, Minn.*

Cover photo
courtesy of Ron Tinsley

The story of Tee's T-Shirts

Taking it to the streets

by Kathleen Hayes

Courtesy photo

I eventually gave my life to the Lord because these people came to my broken-down door to take me to church and youth group events. I was ashamed of where I lived, but they didn't care. That spoke louder to me than anything.

—Ron Tinsley

Born and raised in the inner city of North Philadelphia, Ron Tinsley always knew what he wanted to be when he grew up. "I was shy, and drawing was a way to express myself," says Ron. "I would draw on the walls until finally my mom began buying me paper. My art teachers always encouraged me. I wanted to be an artist or an architect when I grew up.

"One thing I heard all the time was, 'You can't make any money as an artist.' That's what some people will say, but it's not true. They didn't anticipate the use of the computer in art and graphic design. The starving artist is a stereotype—although there are certainly some starving artists out there!"

Born in 1969, "Tee," as he is nicknamed, grew up a "shy, poor kid on welfare in a single-parent non-Christian household in North Philadelphia." The youngest of five, he wore hand-me-downs because, he says, "we were so poor." He loved playing basketball, football and half-ball (in which a tennis ball cut in half is batted with a mop stick) in the streets and playgrounds. Ron confesses to running around in abandoned buildings and jumping rooftops. He also spent a lot of time drawing in the street with broken bricks from abandoned buildings. He could not be kept from drawing.

As a teenager, when his friends were experimenting with sex and drugs, Ron decided to put his energies into his studies and his artwork since he was still "shy and not very popular with the girls." At that time, Ron made some new friends who attended a Mennonite church down the street. "I mainly went to see if any girls were there," he confesses. "I didn't like church services, but the youth group was fun. I formed good friendships in the youth group that have lasted till this day." That church was Diamond Street Mennonite Church, and one of those friends, Janelle Miller, became his wife in 1993.

"As I became more committed to the youth group, I began to think more about Christ," Ron says. "Who is Jesus Christ? Why are these people in church always smiling at me? I eventually gave my life to the Lord because these people came to my broken-down door to take me to church and youth group events. I was ashamed of where I lived, but they didn't care. That spoke louder to me than anything."

One of the best things Ron believes he did for himself was go to a trade school, Dobbins, for three years. His education at Dobbins opened the door to his career in graphic design.

Observing people's behavior: "My classes helped me develop and use my perceptive abilities," Ron says. "I learned to analyze what affects people most and why—which colors, drawings, shapes. When I was younger, I drew because I wanted to make nice things. At Dobbins I began to enjoy the intellectual side of art. It fit with my personality. I learn a lot by observing people's behavior and interactions. That's very important in graphic design and advertising."

Students were supposed to be able to get jobs when they graduated from Dobbins, but Ron discovered that he really needed a college degree to do anything significant. With the help and encouragement of folks from church, Ron applied and was accepted at the University of the Arts in South Philadelphia. He put himself through four years of school, with the help of his church family and friends.

"College taught me much more about the complexity of art—the psychology of shape, size, color," Ron says. "I discovered that the stylistic part of art—drawing—wasn't my strongest skill. My strongest asset was what I call 'concepting.' I see myself as a problem solver. People hire me for my ideas, not because I'm the best illustrator. I can draw, but my job is to hire the right illustrator for the job."

Ron graduated with a degree in graphic design and was one of the first in his class to land a job as a graphic designer. That job was with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) headquarters in Akron, Pa. Although Ron did not want to leave Philadelphia, "I knew that the Lord was opening some doors," he says.

During his college years, Ron had sensed the Holy Spirit's call to youth ministry. In 1994 he had the opportunity to go on a three-week trip to East Africa, where God showed him some new ways of doing youth ministry. He eventually became a part-time youth pastor at his home church, Christian Street Mennonite Church, in Lancaster, Pa.

As youth pastor, he once encouraged some of the kids to support the local Christian bookstore by buying Christian T-shirts there. They refused. When he asked why, they said, "Because the T-shirts there don't reflect our reality or our experience as urban Christians." Ron laughs. "I felt hypocritical because that was exactly the reason I didn't buy them."

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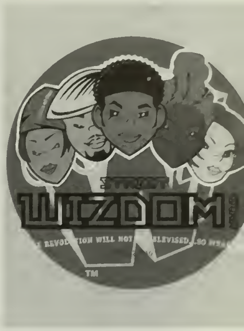
A few of the products Ron Tinsley creates and sells



"Why don't you make some for us?" the youth challenged him.

Back in Philadelphia, Ron had airbrushed unique designs on T-shirts and sold them to earn money for college. But eventually he stopped making the shirts because he didn't have time and because in college they "didn't do a good job of teaching me that what I brought to the table was valuable. In fact, I think I learned that it wasn't valuable. The focus was more on traditional art forms."

Ron began praying about the youths' request. "God gave me this vision for a business of designing T-shirts for the urban teenager," he says. He calls his first shirt "a flop, because I was not being true to my natural talent. I tried to draw something that everyone would like. But it wasn't connecting to the urban environment. Then a few people said to me, 'Draw what you know.' It was like God was saying to me, 'Be original because I, the Lord your God, am original." Shortly thereafter, Prince of Peace Wear (now known as Street Wizdom Wear—based on Proverbs 1:20-21), was born.

Ron resigned from MCC in 1995 and spent two years developing his T-shirt business and doing other freelancing jobs in Lancaster County. He and Janelle moved back to North Philadelphia in July 1997. Ron works as a graphic designer at the Ambler (Pa.) YMCA and is developing his T-shirt business on the side.

A moment of dialogue: Street Wizdom Wear has eight shirt designs available, although only three or four are currently in stock (it's too costly to keep all eight in stock). The T-shirts ask challenging questions and try to engage people in a moment of dialogue. Ron's goal is to create an opportunity for the viewer to ask questions about the message and to invite them to faith in Christ.

Ron loves the Proverbs and often uses them on his T-shirts. He believes that the Proverbs teach universal truths that stretch over into other religions and reach a multiethnic urban market. Even Muslims who look at one of his T-shirts may say, "You know, I'm not a Christian, but that's a true statement." And the wearer can affirm biblical truth.

He uses other Scriptures as well. For instance, one of his women's shirts quotes from Psalm 139: "Behold, I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Respect me." Ron says, "I knew that would connect with black women because respect for women is a big issue in the African-American community. I've actually had both Christian and non-Christian women buy that shirt."

Ron designs his T-shirts for African-Americans, Latinos and other urban-minded people. "I want to design Christian shirts that don't push people away," Ron says. "Too many Christian T-shirts have repelling messages, even messages threatening hell. I want my shirts to encourage people to ask questions about the Bible and ultimately Jesus Christ. I want to create messages that make people say, 'Wow, that's really interesting!'

"My main goal is to open the door for the person wearing the shirt to be a witness for Christ. I want to tell urban kids that God has a purpose for them in spite of what society might say, that God is present in their community and wants to touch their lives. After all, I was a hopeless case until some caring brothers and sisters reached out to me. Now, thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I'm doing what I want to do. I'm fulfilling a childhood dream."

Ron relates to Nathanael's question in John 1:46: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Reword "out of North Philadelphia." And answer, as Philip did, "Come and see." Those who came and saw were pleasantly surprised—and forever transformed.

Kathleen Hayes lives in Plainsboro, N.J.

I want to tell urban kids that God has a purpose for them in spite of what society might say, that God is present in their community and wants to touch their lives.

—Ron Tinsley

You can order or find out more about Ron's T-shirts by emailing him at getwizdom@hotmail.com or visiting his website at www.streetwizdom.com

More than just the "American Dream"

Welcoming

by John M. Spidalieri

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Magdalena and Roberto Ortiz (not their real names) work nine hours a day, six days a week, in a "maquila" (assembly plant), building garage door openers for a well-known American company.

Even with both working, the couple still don't earn enough to lift their family, which includes four children, out of poverty.

Rebeca Jimenez-Yoder, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. staff associate on immigration, recently visited Nogales, Mexico, to tour the maquilas there and meet workers like Magdalena and Roberto.

When workers sign employment contracts, says Rebeca, they also sign a letter of resignation. "That way if people try to organize, they are fired." Most maquilas in Mexico and Central America, she points out, are little more than sweatshops where workers labor long hours in hot, barely ventilated factories for little pay and almost no benefits.

Most Americans would be appalled by such conditions, she adds, yet most Americans, about 70 percent, supported the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. NAFTA gave North American companies license to establish "free-trade zones" where goods are manufactured in maquilas and imported to Canada and the United States without tariffs. However, NAFTA does not mandate labor and environmental standards.

Economic and political realities, such as continued violence and economic collapse in Colombia and Mexico, contribute to migration. Newcomers immigrate to North America in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

Even though they work 18 hours a day, the Ortizes still can't feed their children. "These are the kinds of conditions that promote migration. We can talk about how wonderful it is that these people have jobs in Mexico, but it is not raising them out of poverty," says Rebeca. "It's not the 'American Dream' that brings people to U.S. borders anymore. It's a basic human need to feed your children, or to be with family, and to give your children opportunities."

Streets paved with gold: MCC volunteer Brad Ginter, who works in Miami's Little Haiti community, admits, "Many have heard our streets are paved with gold." However, says Brad, that's not usually the reason immigrants come to Miami. "People are often fleeing violence and uncertainty in countries like Colombia, El Salvador and Haiti," he says. "They are coming to be with family, to live in peace and to provide education for their children."

Many immigrants Brad works with as a legal immigration counselor at Catholic Charities Legal Services come from Latin America or the Caribbean, where poverty and violence are commonplace.

In Colombia, for example, guerrillas, drug traders, paramilitaries and the Colombian army battle to carve out their own piece of the political pie. Rich landowners issue orders from the anonymity of the sidelines, pulling the strings of the military, the government and paramilitary forces. Some 1 million internally displaced people have already lost their homes and livelihoods after more than four decades of conflict.

The United States enters this mix with military aid and loan guarantees. Colombia is the third largest recipient of U.S. military funding, receiving $289 million in "security assistance" last year.

The United States also promises $3 billion in International Monetary Fund loans to Colombia next year. Along with loan guarantees comes IMF pressure to slash food subsidies and social programs in order to tighten the faltering Colombian economy. Colombia already carries $31.8 billion in foreign debt.

"To some degree, it's the same story throughout Latin America," says Rebeca. She notes, however, that the distance between Colombia and the United States makes it difficult for people to come here. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 5 mil-

If you're a richer person of high standing, coming here is easy. But if you're a poor farmer from Guatemala forced from your home by violence, the system isn't set up for you.

—Rebeca Jimenez-Yoder

he newcomer

MCC photo by: John Spidalieri

Fleeing poverty and violence: Brad Ginter, left, Mennonite Central Committee worker in Miami, looks over forms with Rosa, a grandmother from Nicaragua, who is a legal immigrant working to bring her family to the United States.

Economic and political realities, such as continued violence and economic collapse in Colombia and Mexico, contribute to migration. Newcomers immigrate to North America in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

lion Colombians live in the United States. That figure is expected to rise. Of that number, INS estimates 65,000 are undocumented.

The story is different for Mexico, which owes $1.5 billion to foreign debtors. Nearly 8 million Mexicans, documented and undocumented, live in the United States. That number is expected to double by 2020.

Government services: Economic and political policies of the United States, the IMF, the World Bank and other lending organizations and governments affect the lives of people in countries like Colombia and Mexico, says Rebeca. "Debt cripples government services, and people cannot feed their families. Policies that do not create jobs and economic opportunity for the poor impact immigration.

"The American Dream insinuates people don't have the right or ability to provide for themselves and their families in other countries," says Rebeca. "That's where racism comes in. Consciously or unconsciously, we believe we have worth because we are Americans. If you're a richer person of high standing, coming here is easy. But if you're a poor farmer from Guatemala forced from your home by violence, the system isn't set up for you."

John M. Spidalieri is a staff writer for MCC Communications.

Who are these newcomers?

According to the National Immigration Forum, a nonprofit organization in Washington, newcomers are our grocers, our doctors and our next-door neighbors. They are average law-abiding people looking for a better life.

Most immigrants, about 80 percent, come to the United States legally. Slightly more than 9 percent of the U.S. population in 1996 was foreign-born. By comparison, from 1870 to 1920, the foreign-born population comprised about 15 percent of the population. Some 916,000 immigrants arrived in the United States in 1996. Of that number, 840,000 entered as lawful permanent residents, and another 76,000 entered legally as refugees or others fleeing persecution. Many undocumented immigrants do not come to the United States illegally. Four out of every 10 enter legally with student, tourist or business visas and become "illegal" when they stay after their visa expires. According to the 1990 census, 6 percent of all foreign-born Americans had entered the country as refugees or people seeking asylum from various kinds of persecution. Most refugees and asylum-seekers go through the process to become legal permanent residents as soon as they are eligible. One-third of the foreign-born population in 1995 were naturalized citizens.

The top 10 countries from which the United States received immigrants in 1996:

Mexico	(163,572)
Philippines	(55,876)
India	(44,859)
Vietnam	(42,067)
China	(41,728)
Dominican Republic	(39,604)
Cuba	(26,466)
Ukraine	(21,079)
Russia	(19,668)
Jamaica	(19,089)

Year after Mitch: rising water, emotions

Latin Americans rebuilding communities with MCC aid

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras—Santo Ramo has lived along the Ulua River most of his life. At age 60, he stares with sad eyes at the river, rising again behind his house.

"A year ago, I lost my kitchen during Mitch, and some relatives were swept away by the gushing water," he says. "People here are afraid. The rains have been hard and strong, and the river threatens our homes again."

In October 1998, Hurricane Mitch wreaked monumental devastation on Honduras and Nicaragua, prompting a massive relief response by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Now the Ulua, just nine miles from San Pedro Sula, has risen to flood stage, forcing thousands into shelters. Tens of thousands of Hondurans again face the possibility of losing their homes.

In the capital of Tegucigalpa, the Choluteca River last year "wiped out whole sections of the city during Mitch," says MCC worker Anne Marie Sorenson. "Now people are scared of the river and what it can do."

Fear isn't the only emotion people are talking about. Many in Honduras express frustration with government promises to fix dikes.

"They had a year to fix these dikes," says Antonio Pineda Brizuela, a fisherman casting his nets on the Ulua. "The banana company that owns a lot of land around here said they'd do it. The government refused their offer. Now thousands of acres to the south of us are under water. All those crops lost. I'm sick of it."

The hurricane has left people feeling that rain, normally a natural life-giving occurrence, has betrayed them, says Susan Classen, an MCC worker in Nicaragua. "The experience last year erased people's ability to distinguish between destructive rain and normal rain," she says. "Whereas most try to look at the future optimistically, Central Americans now assume the worst is going to happen. Mitch traumatized the people here."

But Classen says there is hope—hope that comes from a strong, healthy community. "When there is any kind of crisis, people do things for people who would ordinarily be strangers." she says. "During Mitch, we heard a lot of stories about people helping those in trouble, people they didn't necessarily know."

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Mennonite Central Committee worker Dionicio Acosta stands over a tributary of the Ulua River in Honduras. One year after it flooded in the wake of Hurricane Mitch, the river is again up, threatening nearby communities.

To help communities rebuild, MCC has helped finance the construction of nearly 1,000 homes in Central America in the past year. And MCC is still working "to rebuild healthy communities," says David Martin, director of MCC's reconstruction work in Honduras.

The MCC Honduras team has grown from six members before the storm to 17. In Nicaragua, the team has gone from nine to 13.

In the Nicaraguan village of Tuskru Tara, a team of short-term MCC volunteers spent two months with reconstruction. "They lived among us and helped a lot of people," says Isabel Poslee. "They really became part of our community."

Her husband, Ordoñez, eats lunch nearby, sitting on a five-gallon bucket with a faded MCC sticker on the side. It is a "hurricane bucket" —one of several hundred the residents of Tuskru Tara received in the weeks after the storm. In addition to contributing $5 million to MCC for Mitch relief, North Americans filled nearly 50,000 such buckets with soap, shampoo, towels and other items for the storm's victims.

Isabel Poslee uses her family's bucket to haul water from one of the community wells. "I apologize for not thanking you for that," she says. "I use it every day, so I didn't think about it."—*John M. Spidalieri of MCC News Service*

Tree-mendous plan marks centennial

No one can accuse Bluffton (Ohio) College of not being able to see the forest for the trees.

In observance of the school's centennial during the 1999-2000 school year, three volunteers have created a campus tree walk, identifying 38 varieties of trees. Robert Antibus, Bluffton biology professor; his wife, Joanne, a Bluffton High School science teacher; and Jon Sommer, a 1973 Bluffton graduate and member of the Bluffton Tree Commission, have produced a brochure and map noting the trees.

Once covered by beech and maple forests, the campus is now home to second-growth forest and extensive ornamental trees. One of the oldest trees on campus is a cottonwood estimated to be more than 70 years old.

AMBS window

Associated
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Focus

Seeking cross-cultural conversation

Jacob W. Elias

During my 1999 spring semester sabbatical, I decided to write about Paul's theology and ethics from within a narrative framework, using first century and contemporary case studies. However, I also longed to have the opportunity to read Paul alongside people from cultures other than my own.

Paul the Jew, as apostle to the Gentiles, crossed major cultural divides. He planted churches in various regions of the Mediterranean and then provided long distance pastoral care by means of letters. It seemed to me that my scholarly reflections on these letters also needed the stimulation of cross-cultural conversation.

Two opportunities presented themselves. On February 9-14, I attended the Latin America Anabaptist Consultation in Asuncion, Paraguay. I observed and listened while some 140 representatives from Mennonite churches in 17 countries in Latin and South America conferred about mission, public presence, and leadership education. Hearing the proceedings through simultaneous translation, I was moved by the sense of God's enabling presence among our sisters and brothers in Christ in that part of the world.

For more than a week following the consultation I then visited the Menno and Fernheim colonies in the Chaco and reconnected with my relatives who had moved from Rosthern, Sask. (my childhood home) to Sommerfeld Colony 51 years earlier.

Jacob W. Elias and Ezekiel Nartey, 1995 AMBS graduate

In April and May I went to Accra, Ghana, under the Mennonite Board of Missions, to teach a course on Paul's letters at Good News Theological College and Seminary. The students, one woman and thirteen men, included mainly African Independent Church members but also one Mennonite. They became my interpretive community during several engaging weeks of teaching. Though I have become accustomed to the use of a computer as a tool in the classroom I found myself in an open air classroom without electricity. Educational technology consisted of a blackboard leaning against the wall, plus three colors of chalk!

My writing project may have progressed more quickly had I not made these two international jaunts. And the intersections between Paul's pastoral theology and the life of the church in Paraguay and Ghana were no easier to recognize than in the American heartland.

However, I am grateful to have taken these journeys into other areas where the church lives and wit-nesses to the reign of God.

I needed these reminders that the church of Jesus Christ is global and diverse. Fellow believers help me become more conscious of my own cultural biases and blinders. In each setting I renewed acquaintances with former AMBS students. Werner Franz, 1984 AMBS graduate, chaired the consultation in Paraguay. Ezekiel Nartey, 1995 AMBS graduate, now serves as vice principal at Good News. I was reminded anew of the ongoing contribution these and others are making to the life of the church. And I was humbled and gratified to realize how much their AMBS training has formed them.

Jacob W. Elias, Th.D., professor of New Testament, AMBS

Inside

Reflections from faculty who have recently traveled and taught abroad

President's Window: Haile Unlikely

Discovering a common commitment to peace

Ben C. Ollenburger

One evening, riding a crowded train in Tokyo, my Japanese host described his enduring impression of North America, from his only visit to the US, a few years ago: "Everything is so big! The houses are big, the streets are big, the cars are big, and the people are big!" My impression of Japan was similar, only in reverse. Of course, much in Japan is exceedingly large—Tokyo, for example—but the Christian community is very small: it remains less than one percent of Japan's population.

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Ben Ollenburger is professor of biblical theology at AMBS. During June and July 1999 he lectured, preached and taught in a variety of congregations and theological schools in Japan.

In Europe and the Americas, we remain largely unconscious of the many ways our cultures sustain Christian faith, even if in a corrupted form. Mennonites often lament the corrosive effects of Christendom's legacy, but we do so surrounded by Christian symbols, in cultures that Christianity has dominated. Japan's culture remains Shinto, Buddhist, and Confucian. Some Japanese Christians speak of the "emperor system"—a deeply internalized sense of identity, duty, and loyalty, ascending from the family to Japan itself, concentrated in the emperor. Being a Christian in Japan stands in tension with being Japanese. A professor at Tokyo Biblical Seminary told me, "The emperor system is within us; it is within me." Though under a different guise, the emperor system is also within us, and within me.

This struck me as my family and I stood, with Paul Yokota,* on the bridge in Hiroshima that had been the Enola Gay's target on August 6, 1945. Competing emperor systems produced the fiery hell that incinerated Hiroshima. Perhaps because the otherwise separate churches in Japan recognize as much, *peace* is not a divisive or controversial issue among them. To the contrary, their common commitment to peace provides a unique opportunity for a united witness to the gospel.

Would that it were so among us.

**Paul Yokota is a 1999 graduate of AMBS.*

Slipping into the lives of others

Since 1988, Walter Sawatsky has spent several weeks each year in the former Soviet Union. His work has included ecumenical contacts, research in archives, helping organize an oral history project among evangelical Protestant groups and teaching church history in some of the new theological schools. He serves part-time as East-West consultant for Mennonite Central Committee in addition to serving at AMBS as associate professor of church history and mission and director of the Mission Training Center.

In the summer of 1999, he began several weeks of travel in the former Soviet Union by teaching at a new Bible School in Kazakhstan. Here are excerpts from his report on this experience.

When I arrived in Astana two ministers met me to drive the remaining 250 kilometers to Shchuchinsk. Because they were originally from Astana, we decided to stay for the Sunday morning service. I was asked to give a 'greeting' and use 20 minutes for it. To my surprise, I managed the Russian and adapted an old sermon.

In Shchuchinsk, I taught eight one-hour classes each day during the week and five hours on Saturday. When the students introduced themselves, almost without exception they indicated that

(continued on next page)

To Paraguay, Argentina and the Netherlands:

Teaching around the globe

It's more than a love of travel that takes Daniel Schipani to different parts of the world. He views his opportunities to lecture and teach in various settings as an expression of his vocation. So it is not unusual for him to be traveling to Latin America and Europe.

Daniel's travels in the summer of 1999 are examples of his this. In July he was a speaker at the National Congress of Evangelical Educators in Asuncion, Paraguay. Focused on the theme of the challenges to Christian educators for the next century, the conference was convened by the theological faculty of the Evangelical University of Paraguay, a cooperative arrangement that involves the two primary Mennonite groups in Paraguay. Participants included a variety of denominational groups representing educators in elementary, high school and university settings.

As a native of Argentina, Daniel also visited that country and preached, as he often does, in his home community.

In August, Daniel spent ten days in the Netherlands with several ongoing involvements. He consults with Mennonite pastors and seminary faculty, exploring with them Anabaptist-Mennonite perspectives on practical theology. He also works with a Roman Catholic program for Spanish-speaking immigrants to Amsterdam. As part of this involvement, he delivered a homily at S. Nicolaaskerk, a Roman Catholic church in Amsterdam—an opportunity rarely given to a Mennonite. His third involvement is with the Department of Practical Theology of the Free University. His ongoing relationship with them has included helping to organize an international consultation on multicultural reading of the Bible.

These experiences intersect with his role at AMBS as professor of Christian education and personality. "They offer opportunities to mutually test and reinforce our understandings with others, particularly from an Anabaptist perspective," Daniel says. "We can test some of our views on church and ministry in different social and cultural settings. In addition I can incorporate contributions stemming from these settings into my teaching and pastoral counseling."

they had taken no course in church history before, though a few had read about the Soviet evangelicals. About two-thirds of my teaching was in Russian, one-third through translation from German to Russian.

Later in the village of Makinsk, I was introduced by Leonid Lauer, director of the Bible School, as an answer to prayer. I gave a sermon which for this audience meant one of but a very few visits from abroad in a year. They listened very attentively for the half hour of preaching. Then came a question and answer period for another half hour. Questions included wanting to know what is a 'Mennonite' (which I answered with a five-minute explanation for someone who might never have heard of the Reformation!) and questions about Christianity in other parts of the world.

My month in the former Soviet Union felt very much like slipping into the lives of people in various hinterlands. I continue to admire the high level of energy and commitment I find among people from the Evangelical Christian Baptist (ECB) community who are working hard at evangelism and attempting some social ministries.

Teaching and learning beyond the classroom

In addition to the four faculty members featured here, other members of the AMBS faculty have recently traveled beyond North America, enriching their ministry through learnings in other parts of the world:

Marlene Kropf met with Puerto Rico Conference churches in Aibonito, P.R. in May and led a study tour on Celtic Spirituality to England, Ireland and Scotland during the summer.

Janeen Bertsche Johnson participated in a Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes learning tour to Guatemala and El Salvador in January.

Ted Koontz traveled to Iraq in February as a member of the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Committee.

President's Window

Haile Unlikely

Ahmed Haile, my friend from college twenty years ago, recently visited AMBS. A native of Somalia, Haile had such warmth and good humor in college that friends called him "Haile unlikely." God, in fact, called him to highly unlikely work. After completing a Master of Arts degree in Peace Studies at AMBS in 1989, Haile returned to Somalia to work as a peacemaker in a country torn by civil war.

In January 1992, Haile was the only Christian with a group of Muslims drafting a peace proposal that would reach across civil war battle lines. The house in Mogadishu where they worked was targeted and a shell burst through the door. Haile was grievously injured, and a friend amputated Haile's leg. For two weeks he hovered near death.

Years later Haile still walks with a cane, and he came to me with a particular concern: Please make certain AMBS never loses its focus on the theological and biblical foundations for peacemaking. "Colleges, universities and seminaries all over the country are developing programs in conflict mediation. I know from my work in Somalia how valuable that is. But the unique contribution of AMBS is in teaching the biblical and theological reasons for this work."

In recent years AMBS has broadened its practice-oriented training. We believe AMBS graduates can preach, counsel, wit-ness and otherwise practice ministry better than ever before. But our long-term contribution to the church will always include a major emphasis on the confessional and intellectual basis of our faith. Some of our best students will write the books and teach the classes that will nurture strong spiritual and intellectual roots for a new generation of discipleship and witness.

Haile, you have shown us the joy and the cost of following Jesus. Thank you. Now AMBS takes up your challenge to continue integrating heart, mind and life in bringing good news to a broken world. *J. Nelson Kraybill*

Jacob W. Elias finds sabbaticals to be treasured opportunities to travel as well as work on writing projects. His 1999 sabbatical took him first to Paraguay and then to Ghana, where he posed with Michael Badusu, moderator of the Ghana Mennonite Church (center) and others. Previous sabbaticals have taken him to Israel and the West Bank and into the life of the first century Christian church as he wrote the Believers Church Bible Commentary on 1 and 1 Thessalonians. See page 1 for brief reflections from Jake on his recent sabbatical travels.

AMBS Panorama

Ecclesiology Conference

The Institute of Mennonite Studies will host a conference at AMBS on Feb. 5, 2000. Entitled, "Without Spot or Wrinkle: Reflecting Theologically on the Nature of the Church," the conference is planned for scholars, church leaders and students of theology.

Presenters will be John Roth, James Juhnke, Jo-Ann A. Brant, Jacob Elias, Ben Ollenburger, A. James Reimer, Lois Barrett, and John Driver. Karl Koop and Mary Schertz are the coordinators; Nelson Kraybill will lead worship.

For more information, contact the Institute of Mennonite Studies at AMBS: 219 296-6243; or Karl Koop by e-mail: kkoop@ambs.edu.

Course offered on-line

Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice, taught by Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder, will be offered on-line during spring semester. For information, check the AMBS web site, www.ambs.edu, following the links for Degrees and Course Offerings and or contact registrar@ambs.edu.

Pastors' Week and Clinics

Interweaving evangelism and peace will be the focus of Pastors' Week, January 24-28, 2000. Calvin Shenk and Michael Banks will be the presenters; Ray and Marilyn Houser Hamm will lead worship.

In-depth clinics are offered on Friday, January 28, for church leaders:

- Enhancing Ministry and Bible Study With a Computer, led by Perry Yoder;
- Worship Planning for Lent 2000, led by Marlene Kropf;
- Is Bigger Really Better? (exploring what kind of leaders will be effective for the Mennonite Church in the future), with Erick Sawatzky.

For more information, contact the AMBS Continuing Education office, 219 296-6207 or bsawatzky@ambs.edu.

Advent commentaries

The Bible Department of AMBS has prepared commentaries on the Advent lectionary readings. Look for them on the AMBS web site: www.ambs.edu/advent.htm

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

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Donors fill gaps on Moscow bookshelves

MOSCOW—For decades, Moscow was the geographic embodiment of what many considered the enemy: the capital of an atheistic government's ideological and military revolution.

At the same time, places such as Newton, Kan., and Scottdale, Pa., were centers of Mennonite publishing, free-market ventures producing books and magazines to nurture, encourage and inform Christians.

Now the twain have met. And the irony is not lost on Paul M. Schrock.

"Who could have guessed during the decades of the Cold War, while we were producing Anabaptist-related books in Scottdale, that the opportunity would come to strategically place many of them in Moscow," says Schrock, director of Herald Press Trade Publishing.

Herald Press, Faith & Life Press and Books Abroad recently sent a total of about 250 books to the Moscow Mennonite Center, a joint project of Mennonite Central Committee, Commission on Overseas Mission and MBMS International, the North American Mennonite Brethren mission agency.

Herald Press, located in Scottdale, is the publisher for the Mennonite Church. Faith & Life Press, in Newton, is the publisher for the General Conference Mennonite Church. Books Abroad, coordinated out of Elkhart, Ind., collects used books in North America for distribution in areas lacking books.

"We're pleased that the center in Moscow can use some of the extra books we have here," says Byron Rempel-Burkholder, Faith & Life Press editor. "Having lived in less affluent parts of the world, I'm often bothered by the fact that in North America, where Christians are glutted with Christian literature, the church is struggling to be biblically literate."

The books donated were nonfiction, including some general church history, some theology and a lot on Anabaptist and Mennonite topics.

"These are very significant contributions, and we are very grateful for the help," says Don Loewen, Moscow Mennonite Center director and MBMS International missionary. "One of our main tasks here in Moscow is to provide information on Mennonite history, doctrine and ethics for students, researchers and seekers. Now we've managed to fill quite a few gaps on our shelves."

Most of the center's books are in English. More and more young Russians, especially in the cities, are studying English, often starting in elementary school. Most Bible schools and seminaries teach English so their students can read theological works not yet translated into Russian.

Books Abroad director Joyce Shertz can attest to the need for books. She visited Russia in 1992. "There was a real desire for literature," she says. "We would pass out books, and people would start reading as they walked away." —*MBMS International News Service*

AMBS dean suffers heart attack on trip

Willard Swartley, dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), continues to improve but remains hospitalized following an Oct. 29 heart attack.

Swartley, 63, was at a family gathering in West Virginia when the attack struck. He is at the University of West Virginia Hospital in Morgantown.

Doctors have not determined the extent of damage to Swartley's heart. In the meantime, AMBS administrators and faculty are assuming his responsibilities.

The seminary already is searching for a dean to begin in the summer of 2001, when Swartley planned to step down. He has taught at the Elkhart, Ind., seminary since 1978 and has served as dean since 1995.

Swartley's heart attack came almost five years to the day after a heart attack claimed the life of AMBS president Marlin Miller. He died Nov. 3, 1994.

Stitchin' time

Participants at the second annual Intercollegiate Women's Conference stitch a quilt during the Oct. 22-23 event, hosted by Goshen (Ind.) College. The conference drew 140 people from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; Goshen College; Manchester College, a Church of the Brethren school in North Manchester, Ind.; and the local community. The quilt will be sent to Bluffton to be displayed for next year's conference. This year's conference included seminars on violence prevention and intervention, depression, and men and feminism. The keynote speaker was author and musician Cheryl Kirk-Duggan.

Goals of Tanzanian business organization: reduce poverty and energize the church

Changuru

ARUSHA, Tanzania—Silas Changuru would like to see all Mennonites in Tanzania have a business in their backyard.

It could be a small business, such as selling charcoal or raising chickens for food or extra cash. Or it could be a larger business, like one of his own companies that custom-grinds corn into flour. Then, he says, Mennonites could better support themselves and the church.

Changuru is chair of a new Tanzanian organization called the Business Promotion Association (BUPA). Most members are Mennonites; all are Christians. Their official aim is to alleviate poverty through business. But they also want to help the church by boosting the economic status of its members.

The idea was sparked in 1995 when Changuru visited the United States. He met Mennonite businessman Henry Rosenberger of Hatfield, Pa., who encouraged him to start a sustainable organization back home, perhaps like Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). Changuru got to work when he returned to Tanzania, and soon BUPA was born.

The new organization has become a consuming passion for Changuru. In addition to the corn mill run, Changuru's business interests include a company that presses oil from sunflowers. The seasonal nature of the work allows him to spend downtime on BUPA activity.

Changuru is also assistant general secretary of the 39,000-member Tanzanian Mennonite Church. He is the first businessman to reach that level of leadership; formerly the job would have gone to a professional cleric.

BUPA is composed largely of Mennonites, but there are also Lutherans, Pentecostals, Anglicans, Catholics and Seventh-day Adventists. "We are ecumenical," says Changuru. "Our common bond is Christ."

Members are involved in a variety of trades and professions: retail shops, pharmaceutical firms, medical professionals, hotel keepers, poultry keepers, firewood and charcoal venders, tailors.

BUPA has eight branches throughout the country with 260 members. Members pay 20,000 Tanzanian shillings (about $30) to join plus an annual fee of 24,000 shillings.

In March, BUPA held a three-day conference that attracted 30 people, almost all of them BUPA members. The theme was business and human rights. Much of the input had to do with how to start a business and how business can support the community and the church. A major contributor was the U.S. Agency for International Development, which covered the cost of technical facilitators.

BUPA would like to do more to encourage small business by providing members with financial and management training, loans and technical assistance. Plans call for every local branch to have a credit union that will offer small loans of less than $100. Work has already started on a credit manual.

As members become more affluent, it is expected they will be better able to support their congregations. BUPA leaders feel the church could also use some entrepreneurial energy.

"We're trying to be a challenge to the church as well as a resource to the church," Changuru says.

The local BUPA branch office is located on the grounds of Arusha Mennonite Church. Behind the parsonage, the pastor's family maintains a flock of chickens to augment his congregational salary. BUPA encouraged them to start the business.

Elsewhere on the grounds, the foundation is being dug for a hammermill to grind corn. German Mennonites paid for the mill and the building. Earnings will go to the church.

Other agencies have been supportive. The local Mennonite Central Committee office contributed to BUPA's conference and has helped arrange contacts. A fraternal relationship exists with MEDA, although BUPA is completely autonomous.—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service.*

Correction: Valley View Mennonite Church is located in Spartansburg, Pa., not Spartansburg, Va., as reported in the Oct. 26 issue.

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Conrad Grebel student wins peace contest

AKRON, Pa.—Lauren Clarke, a student at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., is this year's winner of the C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest, administered by Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Clarke spoke on "Not Just for Decorating the Dinner Table," connecting creative writing and peace. She discussed the inner peace that comes through the act of writing and the global peace that can be achieved by reading others' writing.

Bluffton (Ohio) College student Colin Lasu received second place for his speech, "Have We as Christians Become Complacent in Understanding the Plight of the Iraqis?" Mark Arganbright of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Amy Chupp of Goshen (Ind.) College tied for third. Arganbright spoke about the trauma of divorce; Chupp discussed nonviolent solutions to international conflict. —*MCC News Service*

Hesston volleyball team returning to nationals

HESSTON, Kan.—For the fourth consecutive year, the Hesston College volleyball team will play in the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III national tournament. Owens Community College in Perrysburg, Ohio, will host the Nov. 12-13 tournament.

The Larks automatically qualified for the tournament based on the performance of other teams in their region. This is the fifth time Hesston has advanced to the tournament. The team placed third in 1974 and two years ago finished second.

Vision: Healing and Hope team meets

GOSHEN, Ind.—The two-country structure of the new Mennonite Church will mean that the Vision: Healing and Hope implementation team will need to be very deliberate in its work in the emerging body.

"We will have to be very intentional about wanting to partner together on various programs and initiatives," said member Abe Bergen at the team's Sept. 27-28 meeting in Goshen. "As the implementation team, we want to see Vision: Healing and Hope [statement] become the defining vision of both entities."

They spent two hours with the Goshen Ministerial Council discussing ways they had used the statement in their congregations, such as in a banner, a commissioning litany and a Communion theme.—*GCMC News Service*

Business organization adds family to ministries

WINNIPEG—Nearly a decade ago, Mennonite Economic Development Associates founded the Association of Christians in Business to help Russians connect faith and business. Now ACB is expanding its ministry to help families.

ACB's Club for Ethical Business, which has more than a dozen chapters in Moscow, recently held a half-day family retreat for Christians and non-Christians. Activities included sports, games, singing, testimonies and meditations on Christian family life.

"The idea was to use social networking to strengthen personal and spiritual ties between members of our clubs and to witness to nonbelievers by our mood and mode of behavior," says ACB director Alexander Zaichenko. —*MEDA News Service*

Wife of longtime GC church leader dies at 64

WINNIPEG—Marge Wiebe, wife of longtime General Conference Mennonite Church leader Bernie Wiebe, died Oct. 27 from a brain tumor. She was 64. A memorial service was held Oct. 30 at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Marge Letkeman, a native of Winkler, Man., met Bernie Wiebe in normal school. They taught together for four years. Bernie later served the church in various capacities including editor of *The Mennonite* and as the last assistant moderator of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

She is survived by her husband, three children and three grandchildren.

by the way ...

In the early 19th century in Russia, Klaas Reimer, founder of the Kleine Gemeinde (now Evangelical Mennonite Conference), was concerned that a disciplined Kleine Gemeinde minister had been preaching extemporaneously rather than reading his sermons.
—*Seeking to Be Faithful* by Harvey Plett

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Births

Amstutz, Rebekah Anne, Sept. 27, to Lisa (Headings) and Michael Amstutz, Orrville, Ohio.

Blank, Janelle Renee, Oct. 14, to JoAnne (Beiler) and Kenneth Blank, Middleburg, Pa.

Blauvelt, Avery Nicole, Sept. 20, to Andy and Kim (Boller) Blauvelt, Wellman, Iowa.

Burke, Derek Wayne, Oct. 14, to Denzil and Teresa Burke, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Epp, Kenny Robert, Oct. 14, to Aki (Aratani) and Ray Epp, Naganumacho, Japan.

Fahndrich, John Timothy, Oct. 3, to Pam (Brunk) and Tim Fahndrich, Salem, Ore.

Freed, Evan Scott, Oct. 13, to Connie (Hockman) and Duane Freed, Perkasie, Pa.

Gavenda, Douglas Kurt, Oct. 8, to Becky (Yordy) and Kurt Gavenda, Ashley, Mich.

Green, Nicole Ratigan, Dec. 6, 1994, received for adoption, Oct. 15, 1999, by Kristin Green and John Ratigan, Minneapolis.

Heitzman, Sean Parke, Sept. 30, to Dan and Pam Heitzman, Mount Joy, Pa.

Hochstedler, Kristen Elaine, Oct. 17, to Doug and Rhonda (Hofstetter) Hochstedler, Wakarusa, Ind.

Kanagy, Josiah Robert, Sept. 16, to Audrey (Zimmerman) and Robert Kanagy, Meridian, Miss.

Knepp, Dusty Ray, Sept. 21, to LaVerda (Coblentz) and Ryan Knepp, Iowa City, Iowa.

Litwiller, Danielle Kathryn, Oct. 22, to Kevin and Lisa (Johnson) Litwiller, Hopedale, Ill.

Miller, Maximillian Erik, Sept. 13, to Anika (Klaassen) and Chad Miller, Dunlap, Ill.

Sachs, Acacia Beth, Oct. 14, to Ron and Roseann (Kroeker) Sachs, St. Paul, Minn.

Snyder, Rebecca Lynne, Oct. 8, to Leon and Wendy (Derstine) Snyder, Fleetwood, Pa.

Sommers, Brianna Cheyenne, Oct. 11, to David and Melodie (Schlabach) Sommers, Hartville, Ohio.

Widmer, Sadie Quinn, Oct. 7, to Marcia (Evers) and Todd Widmer, Iowa City, Iowa.

Williams, Chad Daniel, Oct. 9, to Marianne (Stutzman) and Michael Williams, Oley, Pa.

Yoder, Gwendolyn Jean, Oct. 7, to Brian and Sandra (Schlabach) Yoder, Hartville, Ohio.

Marriages

Bender/Yoder: Terri Bender, Parnell, Iowa, and Sherwood Yoder, Parnell, Oct. 2 at Kalona, Iowa.

Bensinger/Kreider: Robert Bensinger, Leola, Pa., and Florence Kreider, Quarryville, Pa., Sept. 4.

Everett/Geiser: Teresa Everett, Raleigh, N.C., and Charles Geiser, Kidron, Ohio, Oct. 10 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Loewen/Ross: Kim Loewen, Minnetonka, Minn., and Jeff Ross, Longmont, Colo., Oct. 2.

Redenius/Siebert: Krystal Redenius, York, Neb., and Craig Siebert, Henderson, Neb., Oct. 16 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Deaths

Blosser, Glen Harry, 81, Newport News, Va., died Oct. 10. Spouse: Lois Blosser. Parents: Samuel and Fannie Craig Blosser (deceased). Other survivors: children Nelson, Leroy, Clayton, Max; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 13 at Hildebrand Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Bontrager, Grace Miller, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 4. Spouse: Amos Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Menno and Ida Mishler Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Jo, Maurice, Robert; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; three stepgreat-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Collins, Edna Dale Combs, 89, Fort Ashby, W.Va., died Oct. 12. Spouse: John Huffman Collins (deceased). Parents: William and Catherine Walker Combs (deceased). Survivors: children Kathryn Moreland; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 15 at Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Eichelberger, Laura Yoder, 65, Kouts, Ind., died Oct. 5. Spouse: Clayton Eichelberger. Parents: Simon and Lydiann Schmucker Yoder. Other survivors: children Carl, Lyle. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Kouts, Ind.

Jaberg, Pearl, 81, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Oct. 14 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Robert Jaberg. Parents: Harvey and Amanda Mast Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Clair and Mike; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Lichti, Barbara, 86, Geneva, Neb., died Oct. 16. Parents: Nicholas and Magdolena Rediger Lichti (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 19 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley, Neb.

Long, Russel, 82, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 19. Spouse: Verna Long. Parents: Charles and Katie Long (deceased). Other survivors: children Doris Alderfer, Russel Jr.; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Nofziger, Zela Graber, 94, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 3. Spouse: Jesse Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Peter and Barbara Graber (deceased). Survivors: children Patty Short, Mary Chelgren, Norma Camp, Janeth, Mona Sauder, David; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 6 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Omelian, Andrew, 87, Nampa, Idaho, died Sept. 30. Spouse: Anna Omelian (deceased). Survivors: daughter Susan Keith; one grandchild; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Nampa.

Reber, Laura Knox, 92, Rantoul, Ill., died Oct. 6. Spouse: Frank Reber (deceased). Parents: Albert and Amanda Kropf Knox (deceased). Survivors: Robert, Joanne Sommer; 11 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; seven great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 8 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Rittenhouse, Mary, 79, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 13. Parents: Norman and Ellen Hagey Derstine Rittenhouse (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 15 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Roth, Christie, 85, West Liberty, Ohio, died Oct. 8. Spouse: Marcille Sites Roth (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Elizabeth Zook Roth (deceased). Survivors: daughter Rita; three grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 12 at West Liberty.

Sensenig, Elizabeth, 85, Lancaster, Pa., died Aug. 28. Spouse: Martin Sensenig (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Sadie Hess Garber (deceased). Survivors: children Mardene, Linfred, Gary, Edgar, Karen Waddell; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 1 at New Holland (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Smucker, Silas, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 13. Spouse Esther Meck Smucker (deceased). Parents: Jesse and Anna Yoder Smucker (deceased). Survivors: sons George, Glenn; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 16 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Sweigart, Effie Kauffman, 87, Perryton, Texas, died Oct. 6. Spouse: Milton Sweigart (deceased). Parents: Felty and Susanna Miller Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Marvin, Earl, Neta Faye Yoder, Donna Moreland; 17 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Perryton Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Catherine Zook, 94, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 10. Spouse: Elmer Yoder (deceased). Parents: Joshua and Mary Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Willard, Roland, Marie Allison, Rhoda Campbell, John; 18 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Zaerr, Eugene, 64, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Arlene Beck Zaerr. Parents: Raymond and Inez Short Zaerr (deceased). Other survivors: children Diane, Ron, Rachel Hook; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 10 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

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classifieds

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Dec. 3, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Looking for leaders** to help launch entry into Canada approved last September. Also openings in the States. Will train. For info, call 661-831-6649 or 888-700-8179; email stewardhg@juno.com. Leave name, address, phone number & email.

- **Menno House**, live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2000. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship**, a small, urban, mission-oriented Anabaptist church committed to living the gospel in New York City, seeks a half-time ***pastor***. Inquire: Kathleen Birkey, 324 E. 61st St. Apt. 5RW, New York, NY 10021; 212-702-8698; email fellowship@mennohouse.com; website www.mennohouse.com

- **Mennonite Your Way Tours** seeks ***secretary*** 20-25 hours per week. Responsibilities include tour planning. Skills necessary: typing, phone contacts, detail work, organization, basic computer. Flexible daytime hours. Position begins January. Office near Mt. Joy, Pa.

  Contact Leon or Nancy Stauffer, P.O. Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538; 717-653-1111.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** will host the 13th annual ***Music and Worship Leaders Weekend*** Jan. 14-16, 2000. Special guest is John Bell from the Iona Community in Scotland, who will guide an exploration of Iona Community worship and Celtic traditions. Other leaders are Ken Nafziger, Marlene Kropf and Marilyn Houser Hamm. Discounts available for groups and early registration. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for registration information.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***Bible instructor*** to teach biblical studies courses in the general curriculum and Pastoral Ministries Program. Desired qualities: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to the Mennonite church. Master's degree minimum. Teaching and pastoral experience preferred. Full-time position available August 2000. Application review begins Jan. 10, 2000.

  Send resume and references to Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8206 or email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for full-time, tenure track ***apparel and textiles merchandizing and design*** position beginning fall 2000. Ph.D. preferred in apparel and textiles or family and consumer sciences with demonstrated teaching ability in apparel and textiles. Teach undergraduate courses in apparel and textiles, introductory interior design, human resource management and human ecology. Provide leadership for apparel, textile and merchandizing program, including student recruitment and advising, and internship supervision. Review of applications begins Jan. 10, 2000, and continues until an appointment is made. For further information see http://www.bluffton.edu

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the academic dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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by Gordon Houser

A list of recent books, videos and tapes that may be helpful as we follow Jesus:

Celtic Blessings and Prayers: Making All Things Sacred by Brendan O'Malley (Twenty-Third Publications, 1998, $12.95) includes ancient and newly written prayers and rituals. Blessings cover every area of human life: family, friends, each room of the house, the meal table, work, journeys, rites of passage, the sick, seasons of the year, animals and creation.

The Gladys Elegies by Barbara Nickel (Coteau Books, 1999, $10.95 Cdn.) is a book of poems that explores the depths of the human spirit and imagination. Order from 401-2206 Dewdney Ave., Regina, SK S4R 1H3.

In a Sheltered Valley Paradise by David Elias (Coteau Books, 1999, $14.95 Cdn.) is a book of short stories set in a community of Mennonites in southern Manitoba. Order from 401-2206 Dewdney Ave., Regina, SK S4R 1H3.

Straight Talk About Spiritual Warfare: What the Bible Teaches, What You Need to Know by Jeff Stam (CRC Publications, 1999, $9.95) helps us deal with and understand the spiritual dimension of life.

A Christian View of Hospitality: Expecting Surprises by Michele Hershberger (Herald Press, 1999, $9.99) says that biblical hospitality guarantees that a surprise is just around the corner, that givers receive more than they give.

The Heroic Face of Innocence: Three Stories by Georges Bernanos (Eerdmans, 1999, $13) gathers three short works by the French literary master best known for his novel *The Diary of a Country Priest.*

From Anabaptist Seed by C. Arnold Snyder (Pandora Press, 1999, $5) is a 54-page study book commissioned by Mennonite World Conference on "the historical core of Anabaptist-related identity."

Jesus Broke the Rules by Ted Lewis (1999, $9.50) is a cassette tape of folk music. Order from Heartland Farm, RR 1, P.O. Box 37, Pawnee Rock, KS 67567.

Conflict in the Church (Mennonite Central Committee, $25) is a 40-minute video with a study guide. Order from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501. The video is also available for loan from any regional MCC office.

Mennonite and Nazi? Attitudes Among Mennonite Colonists in Latin America, 1933-1945 by John Thiesen (Pandora Press, 1999, $25) examines the influence of National Socialism on Mennonite colonists in Latin America.

Making Peace With Conflict: Practical Skills for Conflict Transformation, edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler (Herald Press, 1999, $14.99) is a practical guide to understanding and transforming conflict based on biblical and Anabaptist principles.

Catching the Next Wave: Leadership Strategies for Turn-Around Congregations by Steven Goodwin (Augsburg Fortress, 1999, $11.95) identifies characteristics of healthy, growing congregations and warning signs of churches in need of direction.

Recommended reading

The Wisdom of the Cross: Essays in Honor of John Howard Yoder, edited by Stanley Hauerwas, Chris K. Huebner, Harry J. Huebner and Mark Thiessen Nation (Eerdmans, 1999, $49), is an in-depth analysis of the life and legacy of this century's leading Mennonite theologian. Hauerwas asks in his preface, "How do you honor a man who does not honor honor when his work has been so important to so many?" He claims no answer other than that Yoder "directed us to the Crucified who is alone worthy of love and honor." These 22 essays, four by women, reflect on pacifism, _The Politics of Jesus_, Christian ethics, the church and theological method. Included is an outstanding essay by Yoder entitled "'Patience' as Method in Moral Reasoning: Is an Ethic of Discipleship 'Absolute'?"—_gh_

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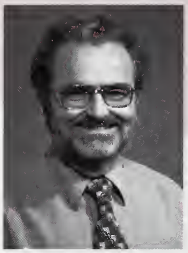

J. Lorne Peachey

What kind of church do we want to be?

During the past two months, my congregation—Kingview Mennonite, Scottdale, Pa.—has been part of the churchwide discussion, "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church." We are among the estimated 500 congregations and other groups doing this study as we anticipate merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church.

According to J. Ron Byler, staff for Mennonite Church USA and one of the coordinators of the study, "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" may be the largest concentrated study ever undertaken by either of our groups. All 14,000 copies of the discussion guide were gone early, with many requests for more since.

I must admit to some pleasure and satisfaction in being part of such a massive undertaking. I also shudder at the enormity of the task of bringing it all together. If our congregation is typical, integration leaders will be overwhelmed with ideas and suggestions for what a new Mennonite Church should be like. Our one youth and three adult Sunday school classes generated so many ideas it became difficult to summarize them into one response from our church. I can't imagine what it will be like to synthesize 500-plus responses into one helpful whole.

> **My dream is that the new Mennonite Church will become as attractive to others as Jesus was to those who met him during the few short years he lived in person among us.**

That, perhaps, is not the most important result. What is more important is the process, the fact that so many of us have taken the time to think about our church and what it should become as we go from one century and one millennium into another.

As I wonder about that, I circled through the New Testament back to Jesus, who began it all with these words to Peter: "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). I see the reactions to Jesus by Zacchaeus in the tree (Luke 19:2-10), the woman with the hemorrhage (Mark 5:25-34), the centurion with the sick servant (Matthew 8:5-13), Mary and Martha with a dead brother (John 11:1-44) and Thomas with his doubts about the resurrection (John 20:24-28). These and many others were irresistibly drawn to Jesus. They could hardly wait to come into his presence.

Why? What was Jesus' style that made him so attractive to others?

For one thing, Jesus allowed people to be themselves. No matter who they were or what they had done, Jesus treated them with dignity, as though they were important, as though their concerns and their lives mattered.

But Jesus not only accepted. He also offered something new, something better. This was a wholeness, a shalom, a forgiveness of the past which was then translated into peace about the future.

Philip Yancey calls this grace. It's the single most important contribution the church can make to the world today, Yancey says in *What's So Amazing About Grace?* (Zondervan, 1997).

How does the church offer this grace? How do we become the communities of grace we've pledged to become in our new vision statement?

We listen. Then listen some more. So little of this happens in our world today. So little of it happens in the church. Time after time in the past several months people have told me of the struggle they've had to find someone who will listen to them.

We accept. Listening is so often difficult because we want to solve, to conclude or to judge without actually hearing and understanding another. Here, too, we take our cues from Jesus. For example, in his encounter with the Samaritan woman by the well (John 4:1-42), Jesus showed us how to accept without belittling or condescending.

But we must do more than listen and accept. Like Jesus, **we offer something better:** cleansing, forgiveness, wholeness, new goals, divine values. We do this by telling others how we have experienced this grace in our own lives. And we invite them to join us on our journey toward wholeness.

That's the kind of denomination I want the new Mennonite Church to be. My dream is that we will become a group as attractive to others as Jesus was to those who met him during the few short years he lived in person among us.—*jlp*

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6 Lord, I've only got a minute
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9 Mennonites, Catholics in second dialogue
16 Happy birthday, Baby 6B

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Sin and spin

In the Oct. 28 issue, Walter Klaassen gives his interpretation of biblical prophecies ("Love Casts Out Fear"). He writes, "Making them into literal descriptions of a future about to unfold makes nonsense of them." I have a question for him. Was Jesus speaking nonsense to his disciples when he said: "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2, KJV).

Historical records show that in A.D. 70, those words of Jesus were literally fulfilled. The Roman general Titus leveled the city of Jerusalem. The reason for Jerusalem's destruction is found in these words of Jesus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:37-38).

Our human nature has a strong aversion to the idea that God judges sin. Perhaps this is the reason so many are attempting to put a spin on those Scriptures that warn us of judgment to come. They willingly seek to deny that Scriptures mean what they say.—*Alfred E. Sauer, Moundridge, Kan.*

Personal preparation, community benefit

Rich Preheim characterizes people who are making preparations for Y2K as "overreacting" and contributing to "hysteria" ("Doing Right at a Y2K Mart," Oct. 26). Does anyone accuse coastal dwellers of being hysterical or overreacting when they stock up on drinking water and flashlight batteries during hurricane season? Those of us taking practical, commonsense steps to protect and provide for our children and elderly in the event of a crisis do not go around labeling those who aren't prepared as lazy or child neglectors. A little courtesy and charity on all sides are called for.

Sticking to facts would also be helpful, such as the fact that the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Senate Y2K Committee and the American Red Cross all have published advisories urging every American household, without exception, to prepare for possible Y2K disruptions. The Red Cross advises individuals and families to make sure they have plenty of water, food, cash, blankets, warm clothing, first-aid supplies, personal hygiene items, extra flashlight batteries and advance supplies of over-the-counter or prescription medications they regularly take.

Far from being selfish, preparing yourself and your family is a much-needed service to your community. In the event of disruptions, every household that is well prepared will be one less drain on limited disaster-relief resources.—*Kathy Scharplaz, Minneapolis, Kan.*

Among family members

I look at the new Mennonite denomination that we are struggling to bring to birth as one large family of Christians into which members, whether congregations or individuals, are loved and respected. In the family that has learned to live together in unity and peace, there are often many different goals and values. But the family remains the center that draws all members back with its love and support.

At the current time, we are having feelings of mistrust and often anger as we deal with issues of structure, membership and biblical interpretation. But we can learn to work together in trust and love when we take time to see our Lord's leading. Out of this will emerge the ability to work at understanding our sisters and brothers as they struggle to be what God intends them to be so long as we are all a part of the worldwide body of Christ on earth.

Many families have members who have or are engaged in activities that are distasteful to the rest. But we do not expell them from the family dinners and other activities, even though they may be active in the military or have a different sexual orientation.

I would like to ask us all to quiet ourselves and listen to the leading of the Holy Spirit, which I think is trying to do a new thing among us. May God shower mercy and love upon us as we struggle to undertand each other. Then we will be able to work together in unity of purpose.—*Russell Welty, Stockbridge, Ga.*

Keeping it all together

Two years ago, *Gospel Herald* published a wise letter that laid out what we need in order to offer ourselves as transforming congregations: (1) welcome, hospitality, acceptance and love; (2) a teaching ministry that places discipleship above sexual gratification; (3) belief in and experience of God's power for transformation. Similarly, Richard Hays has identified New Testament focal images of community, cross

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y readers say

and new creation. It has been rare to find welcome, discipleship and God's power mentioned in the same letter to *The Mennonite.* I thank the writers who kept them together (Readers Say, Oct. 26), the composers of the Vision: Healing and Hope statement and the authors of the study guide "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church."—*Jon Olson, Pittsburgh*

Too much unity?

Someone recently expressed concern that we are worshiping unity (Readers Say, Oct. 12). This is an interesting idea, probably a first cousin to worshiping peace. We tend to worship many things: sports, the flag, dress, even money. But unity? Some people probably feel it's "unity at any price," but for those seeking more perfectly the will of God, how can there be too much unity?

What has given birth to this odd couple of unity and idolatry anyway? I think I know and am sympathetic because I, too, have had my moments. But given the assaults on Christianity these days, it seems to me that the church can use all the unity it can get. 1 Corinthians 12-13 is not optional.—*D. Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.*

Getting attention

Because I have heard Michael Banks preach the Word of God with respect and authority, the letter to the editor "Watch Your Language" (Readers Say, Oct. 19) prompted me to go back and read an article that I previously overlooked. It saddens me that the writer of the letter chose to focus on one word and failed to address those issues that retreat participants grappled with for three days. I was not aware of the retreat until the letter. I do thank the writer for bringing it to my attention.—*Eleanor Nixon, Battle Creek, Mich.*

One world

We are racing into a new global economic order that pressures many of us to work longer and consume more.

by Tom Sine

We are racing into a new millennium that is changing at blinding speed. Futurists attempt not only to identify trends but primary driving forces for change. There is a growing consensus that one of the primary driving forces is globalization. There is a growing discussion of the implications of this change in the economic and political arenas. But there is virtually no discussion in the church regarding the likely impact of globalization for our lives, families, congregations and our poorest neighbors.

In *Mustard Seed versus McWorld: Reinventing Life and Faith for the Future* (Baker Books, 1999), I argue that we have become part of a one-world economic and technological order while no one seems to have noticed. When the Berlin Wall came down and the Soviet Union imploded, all the centrally planned economies were thrown into the trash bin of history. For the first time ever, virtually every nation joined the capitalist race to the top.

Part of what has made it possible to create this new global economy is the parallel creation of a one-world technological order. Someone has written that we have girded the planet in a global electronic nervous system of satellite dishes and fax machines. Through that new global electronic nervous system more than $1.5 trillion circulates every day. I join others in calling this new global economy "McWorld," because McDonald's has just passed Coke as the number one most recognized global logo in the world today.

Our children are under mounting pressure to become committed consumers at earlier and earlier ages. Kids are actually getting beat up at school if they don't wear the right corporate logo. Celebrities have replaced heroes of the faith as those to look up to.

We have all benefited from the creation of this new global economy. At our local supermarket we can buy food from all over the world that wasn't available 10 years ago. We can visit with friends or Christian leaders half a world away through email. Unfortunately the creation of a one-world economic order is raising a host of new challenges for our lives, families, congregations, the marginalized and the planet itself.

Global economic order and the poor: The results from the first 10 years (1989-99) of this new global economic order is that it works brilliantly for the top 20 percent, but the bottom 20 percent are losing ground. We have seen a record number of billionaires and millionaires created in the 1990s. But the global poor are actually seeing their percentage of global income decline because only those with assets have any possibility of winning in this brutally competitive race to the top. And this economic growth also comes at a high price to the environment.

The promise of this new global economy is that if we trust our future to global free trade and free enterprise, we will consume at levels never imagined before. Christine, my wife, and I recently attended the Seattle Home Show. We were astonished to see more than 100 hot tub dealers selling their huge, expensive hot tubs and saunas. We wondered aloud, "How can a community of a million people sustain that many hot tub dealers?" Then we remembered we live in Microsoft Land. Many of these new millionaires have built 20,000- to 40,000-square-foot mansions for themselves, with three to five hot tubs each.

Some of the pastors in Microsoft Land question whether this is the good life at all. They report that as many of their members become wealthy, they get caught up in the status, prestige and glamour of their new wealth and drop out of church. Bill Gates doesn't want 40 hours a week from his employees. He wants 70 to 80 hours a week. Pastors report that many of these folks not only don't have time for church but also aren't there to see their kids grow up.

McWorld wants more of your money: Essentially this new global economy is a shareholder economy. And shareholders don't want 3 percent to 5 percent return on their investments. They want 15 percent to 25 percent return. The only way to insure that high level of growth in the economy is for all of us to ratchet up our appetites for more. The marketers of

ready or not

McWorld are constantly at work trying to persuade us that yesterday's luxuries have become today's necessities.

The message seems to be getting through. Americans are bingeing on consumer goodies as never before. Consumer debt and personal bankruptcies are breaking all records, and savings are at minus 2 percent. For the first time in decades, Americans are actually spending more than they are making by using up their savings. More and more Americans, including Christians, have come to believe the fiction that the more we own the more we are.

The marketers of McWorld are particularly targeting our young. "You must get kids branded by age 5 if you want them as faithful consumers of your product," says a marketing executive in a corporate training session in the TV documentary *Affluenza*. If you have ever tried to get a 5-year-old past McDonald's, you know how successful they are.

Robert Williams of the Rand Youth Poll stated that Generation Y (14- to 20-year-olds) has greater incremental allowance from parents. They also earn more money from part-time jobs than their predecessors. He concludes: "It is a generation that has grown up with excess as a norm." Our children are under mounting pressure to become committed consumers at earlier and earlier ages. Kids are actually getting beat up at school if they don't wear the right corporate logo. Celebrities have replaced heroes of the faith as those to look up to.

Little is offered at home, church or through religious education to counter the growing seduction of the McWorld shopping mall. We need new resources in stewardship education to help us become more responsible stewards not only of our money but also of our time.

McWorld wants more of your time: In every church where Christine and I speak we ask, "How many of you find you are having to work harder and longer?" At least two-thirds of the hands are raised in every audience. One 40-year-old engineer came up and told me he had accepted a promotion that increased his work hours from 50 to 70 hours a week. He told me with head downcast that he not only had to resign all his responsibilites at church but that he has little time with his wife and three kids anymore and feels guilty.

Louis Harris polls tell us that the average American works 10 hours more per week than in the 1970s. In our new global economy the pressure to work harder and longer is only likely to increase. This means Christians are likely to have less time for family and church, less time to pray, and less time and money to invest in the work of justice and care of creation. There are virtually no forums in our churches to help us with decisions about how long to work, how much to spend or in how many activities our kids should be involved.

Reinventing our lives to put first things first: One of the major reasons we find people have such a hard time sorting their priorities is that we all seem to struggle with a serious disconnect. Most of us have no idea how to take whatever is preached on Sunday morning and connect it to our lives Monday through Saturday. Research shows that whatever we believe and value as Christians has little impact on how we use our money and time.

As we race into this new globalized future, we must find practical ways to deal with the mounting pressure to work longer and consume more. We must find a connection between what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ and how we use our time and money and how we raise our kids. We must find a way to live out our faith more intentionally seven days a week.

> **We must find a connection between what we believe as followers of Jesus Christ and how we use our time and money and how we raise our kids. We must find a way to live out our faith more intentionally seven days a week.**

Living our lives and raising our kids on purpose: Jesus' priorities were not established by the pressures of his dominant culture but by his commitment to the purposes of God. "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of

continued on page 6

One world continued from previous page

The only way to contend with this growing challenge is to create ways to help individuals and families in our congregations more intentionally live out the aspirations that motivate the mustard seed instead of those that power McWorld.

the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19). If the Son of God needed a mission statement to live his life on purpose, so do we.

In *Mustard Seed versus McWorld,* I outline how a church can offer a 10-week course to help members put first things first. I suggest the first session be devoted to inviting participants to express why they are stressed. Then I suggest that three weeks be spent on studying Scripture to find a focus for each person or family that comes directly out of Scripture study. Christine's and my mission statement comes from Proverbs 31:8-9: "Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."

Weeks five to seven could be devoted to helping participants translate their mission statement into a specific vocation focus through their work or their discretionary time. An attorney might decide to shift her legal training to focus on becoming an advocate for abused women or environmental justice. Or a family might decide to spend two hours a week visiting a senior care facility, with the children reading to the residents.

The final three weeks of the course could be spent helping participants reinvent their schedules and lifestyles in ways that reflect more the aspirations of God's mustard seed rather than the aspirations of McWorld. Christine and I go on a prayer retreat four times a year and use our mission statement to set new goals for every part of our lives, from our marriage to our finances.

We also come back from our retreat with a new schedule that reflects a new rhythm for our lives and check in with each other every week to see how we are doing. Through this process we have created a more festive, less stressed way of life for ourselves and thus have more time left to speak out for those who have no one to speak out for them.

We are racing into a new McWorld global economic order that pressures many of us to work longer and consume more. The only way to contend with this growing challenge is to create ways to help individuals and families in our congregations more intentionally live out the aspirations that motivate the mustard seed instead of those that power McWorld. If we put first things first, we will have more of our time and resources left over to invest in addressing the growing global challenges of justice and care of creation in the 21st century.

Tom Sine lives in Seattle and teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. The research for this article is drawn from his book Mustard Seed versus McWorld: Reinventing Life and Faith for the Future.

Ways to find quiet time alone with God

Lord,

by Debra Allen

I call it my "Little House on the Prairie Syndrome": If only I lived in a simpler age, I could easily find time to sit on the porch and pray, read my Bible, reflect, meditate.

Perhaps you, too, dream of long, worshipful hours alone with God, but several small children or a demanding job leave you few moments to call your own. How can you possibly wrestle one more thing—especially something that requires quiet and concentration—into your already overloaded schedule?

Plan for it.

Is it important to you? Then it's important enough to plan for—whether it's a birthday party, a dinner or an important letter.

For me, seeing such an appointment in black and white underlines its importance. My "official" daily schedule includes QT (for Quiet Time) along with housework, piano lessons and other necessities. I prepare the children to occupy themselves, and I deflect phone calls with, "I'll call back in an hour." Viewing my time alone with God as I do any other obligation helps me control whatever interruptions may arise.

In *Disciplines of the Beautiful Woman*, Anne Ortlund tells of making quiet time during one season of her life by setting the alarm for the wee hours of the night, studying for an hour, then returning to bed.

I hope that doesn't become necessary for me. However, I recognize that consistent personal worship doesn't just happen. I must apply some kind of specific strategy to my specific needs—even if it hurts.

Be realistic.

To be honest, I'm not sure that I could follow Anne Ortlund's regimen for midnight devotionals, even if I wanted to. "Be realistic," I tell myself, and such advice has helped dispel discouragement about my personal time management.

Two-year-old Amy rarely cooperates with something that steals Mommy's attention. Trying to concentrate on Bible reading or prayer with her around is like having a quiet time in the middle of a parade—distracting, to say the least. A realistic assessment calls for making

’ve only got a minute

early morning my logical choice: not because God reveals himself more readily before sunrise but because that is when all the other responsibilities are sleeping.

Your obstacles may include a phone that rings off the hook, friends and family members who do not understand the need for an hour of privacy, or an inflexible work schedule. Can you think of creative ways of overcoming such discouragements?

During a time when circumstances rendered us a trifle too accessible, my husband and I often retreated for personal worship to a nearby university library where we found both quiet and anonymity. A friend escaped family distractions by bundling his baby into a stroller first thing each morning for a prayer walk, talking aloud to the Lord as he cruised the neighborhood.

The saints of old had their prayer closets in which to hide. Perhaps your prayer closet could be a car parked in the company lot or a corner of the local playground. Or maybe the most realistic option is to lock yourself in the bathroom now and then.

Stretch it.

A little time of prayer and meditation—even if it is consistently interrupted by crying babies or emergency phone calls—is better than no devotional time at all. Spiritual food can be stretched—like nibbling all afternoon on that slice of pie left on the countertop.

Journaling is one of my favorite ways to preserve spiritual nourishment. I jot down prayer requests, sins confessed, personal applications and phrases or verses that speak to me. Then when the phone or doorbell scatters my thoughts, I can easily gather them together again.

When I write them down, small insights that I record day by day grow into major themes and patterns, reflecting the cumulative benefit of those brief moments of meditation—like meat, vegetables and seasonings simmered together to make a hearty soup.

“Mini-meals” likewise extend the benefits of a meager quiet time. My children are creative (translation: messy), so we spend a lot of time in the kitchen. I often leave my Bible open on the kitchen table or counter to remind me of that unforgettable insight gleaned in the early morning.

You may prefer to copy the day’s verse or passage on a file card and keep it with you for meditation at the park, during your lunch hour or while you wait in one of those many lines. Another example of “fast food” comes from a friend who bought an inexpensive Bible and underlines anything that tells of who God is. At chance moments she can thumb through it and quickly find inspiration for praise and worship. Busy people often need such healthy between-meal snacks.

Seize the moment.

But a quick bite here and there cannot take the place of a prolonged time of prayer and meditation.

When my schedule clears unexpectedly—or when I feel the need to deliberately cordon off the time—I like to have a miniretreat. Depending upon how “mini” the time constraints are, I review notes or studies that have been meaningful, dip into favorite devotional books, such as J.I. Packer’s *Knowing God*, commit specific projects and needs to the Lord in prayer or reflect on passages too lengthy for my daily quiet time.

Can’t afford the time? When facing an important decision or experiencing a spiritual drought, I can’t afford not to take the time to discuss things at length with my heavenly Father. I put the older children in charge, forget chores and errands, notify my husband, unplug the phone, ignore the doorbell and take a morning off to spend in prayer and Bible reading. It’s a perfect opportunity to set spiritual goals, get a biblical perspective on burdens and review (or start) a journal.

Sometimes I feel like the poor widow in the New Testament who had only two mites to give to the Lord. My mites are minutes instead of coins. As with that dear lady, it’s not how much I have but what I do with it that counts.

Don’t be discouraged that your quiet time is fragmented into “mites.” Plan for them, seize them, stretch them—from here to eternity.

Debra Allen lives in Starkville, Miss.

Sometimes I feel like the poor widow in the New Testament who had only two mites to give to the Lord. My mites are minutes instead of coins. As with that dear lady, it’s not how much I have but what I do with it that counts.

Mission task groups tackle transformation

Findings to be used to develop new mission structures

WINNIPEG—If Virgo Handojo has an identity problem, he says it is even worse for his children.

"Moving around has resulted in rootlessness in the second generation," says Handojo, a Mennonite Board of Missions board member and an Indonesian of Chinese ethnicity living in Pasadena, Calif. "It means a constant seeking for identity. For myself, in Indonesia, I cannot say I'm Indonesian. I was born in a Chinese family, but I can't speak Chinese. I call myself a culturally rootless person. When my children ask, 'Who am I?' I'm not sure what to say."

The number of people, such as refugees, who find themselves outside their native cultures is increasing. And that will affect the context for outreach by the new Mennonite Church, reported one of four task groups at an Oct. 27-30 meeting in Winnipeg of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM), Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada.

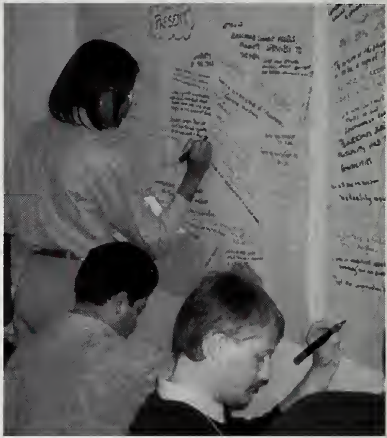
The four task groups were created to study aspects of mission work as part of the process to transform current efforts into new structures for Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada. The groups will give their final reports at a March 2000 mission consultation in Harrisonburg, Va.

Handojo is a member of the task group studying social, economic and political realities. His group cited increasing polarization between rich and poor, rapid population growth, changing roles of women and increasing quests for spiritual meaning outside traditional religious practices.

A second focus group is looking at emerging trends in other North American mission agencies. The group noted the Southern Baptist Convention for developing a mission vision among its participants, starting at a young age.

"If mission education doesn't begin with children, it will not be effective in introducing a strong core of mission vision in congregations," said Richard Showalter, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa.

The group also noted a case study of Vietnamese Christians who are returning to Vietnam from North America to work as missionaries. "What they have done shows us that mission can be stimulated [with very modest means]," said Tom Lehman, COM board member from Chapel Hill, N.C. "But it's so effective they can't keep up with the demand [for mission workers]."



GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Mennonite Board of Missions board member Kenyetta Aduma from Youngstown, Ohio, (left to right) and Commission on Overseas Mission board members Byron Guzman from Lansdale, Pa., and Gary Janzen from Delta, B.C., record their dreams for mission in the new Mennonite Church during an Oct. 27-30 meeting in Winnipeg.

Another group is looking at trends in Mennonite congregational and area conference missions, including changing interests and involvement of congregation members.

"One concern … is that we don't have enough input from young people," said Marilyn Miller, CHM staff member from Boulder, Colo. "We need to get more of our youth and young adults involved in what mission means for them."

The fourth task group is examining a theology of mission. "We saw that we had neglected to isolate the scriptural basis [for mission]," said James Krabill, MBM staff member from Elkhart, Ind. "So task group members were [each] asked to identify … five key biblical texts."

The resulting list had more than 50 texts cited, he said.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and MBM news services*

CHM, MBM sign plan for short-term work

Mennonite Board of Missions will administer joint short-term mission programs, according to a covenant between MBM and the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

Representatives from CHM and MBM signed the agreement Oct. 28 during joint meetings in Winnipeg.

MBM's office in Elkhart, Ind., will be responsible for programs including Abraham and Sarah Caravans, Group Venture, Service Adventure, Service Opportunities for Older People and Youth Venture.

CHM and MBM last year signed a similar covenant for CHM, based in Newton, Kan., to administer Mennonite Voluntary Service on behalf of both agencies.—*GCMC and MBM news services*

The MEDA Store

October 1999

... that all people may experience Christ's love and utilize their abilities to earn a livelihood, provide for families and enrich their communities

What's the best way to give to help the poor?

Eight centuries ago, the Jewish philosopher Maimonides suggested there were eight levels of giving to help the poor. The lowest was giving, but reluctantly; the highest: giving in such a way as to provide employment, so the receiver will not need help again.

You don't have to go back 800 years to find the best way to give to help the poor. Today MEDA creates or sustains about 10,000 jobs every year around the world through programs which provide loans, training and marketing assistance—programs which enable people to break the cycle of poverty so they won't need charity again. On average, a gift of $350 enables MEDA to create or sustain one job in the developing world. In 1998-99 MEDA lent $6.4 million U.S./ $9.6 million Cdn to 8,000 clients in Africa, eastern Europe, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

Inside you will find products from the MEDA Store which will help you give in the best way—by creating employment. All "purchases" of shares from the MEDA Store are tax receiptable. When making a "purchase," mark the project name, number and which portion of the project you wish to "buy" on your check. In return, you will receive a certificate noting how many shares of each project you have purchased. To "purchase" a product by credit card, call MEDA at 1-800-665-7026.

Send your contributions to: (Canada): MEDA, 302-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2

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Happy shopping!

Founded in 1953, MEDA is an association of about 3,000 North American Christians who seek to connect their faith and work in a needy world by providing hope, opportunity and economic well-being to low income people in the developing world and North America. For more information, call 1-800-665-7026 or visit www.meda.org

HAITI RECONSTRUCTION

People in Haiti who want to start small businesses face many challenges. One of the most pressing problems is poorly maintained or non-existent roads, the result of deforestation. The lack of trees creates runoff from rain, which washes out the roads. Without good roads, farmers and businesses can't get their products to market. In 1994-98 MEDA addressed this problem by employing Haitians to repair 125 miles of rural roads, build five bridges, rehabilitate 44 miles of irrigation canals and plant 993,558 trees. Over 700,000 person days of employment were created. Over the next three years MEDA wants to build on this success by planting 500,000 more trees to protect roads; help 30 communities get access to clean water; form 50 community banks; and provide 1,500 small loans to businesses. As a result, it will be easier for rural businesses to get started and grow. MEDA funds required: $144,000; $50 buys one share of the revolving loan fund ($50,000); $94 "buys" one share of the operational budget ($94,000). **Mark your check Haiti, MS #1.**

GIVE THE POOR SOME CREDIT

These are exciting times in Romania, as people in that former Communist country adapt to their new freedoms. But for small businesses, things are still tough. They have lots of good ideas, but can't get the small loans they need to turn dreams into reality—local banks will only consider loan requests for $20,000 or higher. Together with World Vision and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), MEDA is setting up institutions which provide small loans to small businesses. In the last two years over 900 jobs have been created as a result of the project. MEDA funds required: $147,000; $50 "buys" one share of the revolving loan fund ($50,000); $97 "buys" one share of the operational budget ($97,000). **Mark your check Romania, MS #2.**

GONE FISHING

For people in the fishing industry on Nicaragua's western coast, getting a fair price for their catch is an ongoing problem. If they sell their catch themselves, they can earn more. But they lack the business skills and marketing know-how to sell fish to local retailers and the export market. MEDA wants to help them realize their goal of increasing their income by helping them set up a marketing association and by providing business and marketing training. MEDA funds required: $10,000; $100 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Fish,** MS **#3.**

HURRICANE MITCH RECOVERY—AND BEYOND

In 1998, Hurricane Mitch devastated bean farmers in Nicaragua's highlands. MEDA provided loans to farmers in La Laguna so they could rent land untouched by the storm and grow new crops. After selling their new crop, they paid back the loans and now want to improve their yields and crop quality and find new markets for their produce. MEDA will help by providing the start-up capital for a new marketing association, which will also offer technical assistance and training. Goal for the first year is to buy 2,100 tonnes of beans, which will be sold locally and throughout Central America. MEDA funds required: $219,000; $146 "buys" one share of the revolving loan fund ($146,000); $73 "buys" one share of the operational budget ($73,000). **Mark your check, MS #4.**

GROWING BUSINESSES IN TANZANIA

With over 100 customers a day, Mselem Ally had a bustling restaurant business in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. But his income was small—because his cash-flow was limited, he couldn't buy food in large enough quantities to enjoy lower wholesale prices. Then he heard about MEDA, and how he could borrow money at affordable rates. With his loan of $900 U.S. he was able to buy in bulk at lower prices and increase his income by 50 percent. When he pays off this loan, he wants to get a larger loan to open a second restaurant; his long-term dream is to build a thriving family business which he can turn over to his six children. MEDA's goal is to help more small entrepreneurs like Mselem by expanding its credit program in Tanzania. To do this, MEDA needs to increase its loan capital and train local people to be managers. MEDA funds required: $141,000; $66 "buys" one share of the operational budget ($66,000); $75 "buys" one share of the revolving loan fund ($75,000). **Mark your check Tanzania, MS #5.**

KITUMBUA
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SLESI SIAGI
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UGALI NYAMA
WALI NYAMA
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SPINACH
UGALI MKAVU
WALI MKAVU
UGALI /WALI SUPU
UGALI ROSTI
NAWA PAPA

POOR PERSON'S WAL-MART

Xikelene market in Maputo, Mozambique, is a poor person's version of Wal-Mart —everything you could possibly want can be found in the sea of shacks and stalls which line the dusty lanes. Many of the vendors live a hand-to-mouth existence; revenue from sales must be used to buy inventory, which means there is little income. A small loan can help them boost inventory and gain breathing space. However, like most poor business people in the developing world, these vendors don't even get the time of day from local banks. For one thing, they have little collateral or credit history; for another, the loans they need are too small to interest the banks. That's where MEDA comes in, providing credit to this ignored sector. MEDA is helping 300 businesses in the market, two-thirds of which are run by women. The average loan size is $250; the result is improved incomes, which allows people to provide for their families and send children to school. MEDA funds required: $199,000; $56 "buys" one share of the revolving loan fund ($56,000); $143 "buys" one share of the operational budget ($143,000). **Mark your check Maputo, MS #6.**

REACHING OUT IN MEXICO

Mennonites in Mexico City have decided they would like to address unemployment needs in their community by helping local people start or grow businesses. They have asked MEDA to help them find the best way to accomplish this goal. MEDA funds required: $7,500; $75 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Mexico, MS #7.**

PERUVIAN POTATOES TO EUROPE

In the Andes highlands of Peru, poor indigenous farmers grow a unique potato that is in great demand in Europe. But producing enough potatoes, maintaining quality and marketing are big challenges. MEDA will help farmers develop business and marketing plans and assist with quality control, so they can sell their produce and increase their incomes. MEDA funds required: $67,000; $67 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Potatoes, MS #8.**

HELPING IRAQ RECOVER

One day, the sanctions against Iraq will be lifted. When that happens, the country's small businesses will need to swing into high gear to recover from years of being cut off economically from the rest of the world. MEDA has very good contacts within that country and in neighbouring Jordan, which is home to many Iraqi refugees. In order to be ready to help when the sanctions are lifted, MEDA will explore ways it can assist small businesses in that country. MEDA funds required: $5,000; $50 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Iraq, MS #9.**

NEW MARKETS FOR EGYPTIAN FARMERS

Many churches and organizations have been active in Egypt helping set up farming cooperatives to improve crops and increase yields. Their efforts have been successful, but now the farmers need new opportunities to sell their additional crops. MEDA will explore ways to cooperate with various organizations to help Egyptian farmers find new marketing opportunities in Egypt and beyond. MEDA funds required: $10,000; $100 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Egypt, MS #10.**

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

Ten years ago, few beans were grown or eaten in Bolivia. Today beans are a major cash crop, thanks in large part to the efforts of Cal Miller, who spent many years as MEDA's Country Manager in Bolivia. People who know about beans say he is single-handedly responsible for introducing the crop and providing the vision for a national production and marketing system. Today edible beans compose about 11 percent, or $110 million, of Bolivia's annual exports of $1.1 billion. There are many lessons to be learned from MEDA's experience with beans in Bolivia—lessons which can be applied to other countries. To do this, MEDA will embark on a large-scale evaluation of how its work has affected families, and the country as a whole . MEDA funds required: $21,000; $21 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Bolivia, MS #11.**

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN CHINA AND TIBET

MEDA's recent involvement in helping plan and design a $7.5 million poverty reduction project in China has opened new doors for work in that country. Calls are going out for assistance with microenterprise development, precisely the kind of work in which MEDA has expertise. In order to see if such involvement is feasible, MEDA will explore options for possible work in China and Tibet. MEDA funds required: $10,000; $100 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check China, MS #12.**

HAITI VILLAGE BANKS

The Rural Community Banks program in Haiti has successfully established 14 banks to date, making loans to 270 people. Now MEDA Haiti wants to expand the program by creating new banks to lend $80,000 to more than 800 clients. MEDA funds required: $55,000; $55 "buys" one share of the share. $2,500 will finance the start-up of one bank. **Mark your check Banks, MS #13.**

DECLARING WAR ON MALARIA

One of the leading causes of death in Africa today is mosquito-borne malaria, causing as many as two million deaths a year, most of them children. For years, the battle against mosquitoes was waged by spraying insecticides. However, health officials concede that this isn't enough. Now attention is turning to a new weapon—insecticide-treated mosquito netting. The biodegradable chemical is safe for humans, but lethal to mosquitoes that touch down on a freshly-treated net. Many mosquitoes don't get that far, as they tend to avoid a bedroom with a treated net. MEDA is joining the war against malaria by helping research the use of insecticide-treated nets in six African countries; one or two of these will then be chosen for further focus and expanded work. The goal is to help small businesses manufacture netting and re-treatment kits, and promote their use. MEDA funds required: $24,000; $24 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Malaria, MS #14.**

North American Services

HELPING NORTH AMERICA'S INNER CITIES

One of the problems facing North America's inner cities is the flight of businesses to the suburbs. But there are over two million low income entrepreneurs— people who live in inner cities—who would like a chance to help their communities by starting or growing businesses. Through MEDA's microenterprise training program, called ASSETS, many are getting that chance as they obtain valuable business training to help them create successful enterprises. The ASSETS program is a joint effort between local groups and churches and MEDA; it is now operating in eight U.S. locations. Our goal is to help local groups and churches develop 12 new programs in North America during the next five years. At present, six programs are getting off the ground; MEDA is offering matching grants during the start-up phase of these new ASSETS programs. MEDA funds required: $100,000; $100 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check ASSETS, MS #15.**

NORTH AMERICAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM LOCATIONS

TOLEDO, OHIO: ASSETS Toledo will begin training in late 1999. The new program is a joint vision of Toledo Mennonite Church, Friendship Baptist Church and MEDA of Northwest Ohio. MEDA funds required: $17,650; $176 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Toledo, MS #16.**

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA: BusinessStarts will begin training in late 1999 in south central Los Angeles. BusinessStarts, an ASSETS-type program, is being developed by JobStarts, a faith-based job training program, in association with Christian Reformed, Presbyterian and Mennonite organizations. MEDA funds required: $17,650; $176 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Los Angeles, MS #17.**

HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA: Valley Microenterprise Alliance (VMA) began training in June, 1999 and is developing mentor and lending services. VMA is developed on the ASSETS model and plans to provide services to several counties in the Shenandoah Valley. The new program is a collaborative effort of local corporations, banks, colleges and churches. MEDA funds required: $17,650; $176 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Harrisonburg, MS #18.**

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA: DREAM (Developing Resources for Employment and Microenterprise) has developed a new microenterprise program for Latinos in Fresno County. DREAM works with churches and community organizations to train Latinos how to develop a business plan and then matches them with the Small Business Development Center to provide loan funds for start-up. MEDA funds required: $17,650; $176 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Fresno, MS #19.**

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA: A feasibility study during the fall of 1999 is expected to recommend a new ASSETS program in Philadelphia with Mennonite and other urban churches as primary partners. Program launch will be in early 2000. MEDA funds required: $14,700; $147 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Philadelphia, MS #20.**

INDIANA: MEDA is identifying a site for a new program in central Indiana. A feasibility study will clarify the location and specific target group for the new ASSETS program. MEDA funds required: $14,700; $147 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Indiana, MS #21.**

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE CONNECT FAITH AND WORK

One of MEDA's goals is to help Christians make their faith relevant in their work experience. Our annual convention is an excellent way for people to learn from top-notch speakers and hear how others are connecting their faith and work. Unfortunately, many younger people cannot afford to go to convention; as a result, MEDA offers $200 scholarships to first-time convention attenders under 35 years of age. Total Budget:$23,530; $235 "buys" one share. **Mark your check Scholarships, MS #22.**

The "purchase" of shares from the MEDA Store does not constitute a legal offering; rather, it is a symbolic way for purchasers to participate in MEDA's efforts to help poor people around the world find hope, opportunity and economic well-being.

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Mennonite, Catholics meet for second dialogue to dispel misunderstandings, gain knowledge

VENICE, Italy—One year after their historic first meeting, seven Mennonites and six Roman Catholics gathered in Venice Oct. 12-18, inching past initial politeness toward self-examination and self-discovery.

The Venice meeting was the second of five planned international dialogues sponsored by Mennonite World Conference (MWC) and the Vatican's Pontifical Council of Promoting Christian Unity. The meetings are designed to dispel misunderstandings from the past and to gain more accurate knowledge about each other in the present.

Two sets of papers were presented, one historical, the other contemporary. Neal Blough, MWC participant from Paris, addressed "The Anabaptist Idea of the Restitution of the Early Church," while Peter Nissen, a Catholic from the Netherlands, presented a paper on "The Anabaptist-Mennonite Tradition of Faith and Spirituality and its Medieval Roots."

Also presented were contemporary examinations of the church. Vatican representative James Puglisi gave the Catholic view, and Helmut Harder from Winnipeg presented the Mennonite perspective.

But in learning about each other, the Mennonite delegates are also learning about themselves. "We're having to articulate what is the core of Anabaptist understanding of our particular identity and history," says MWC executive secretary Larry Miller from Strasbourg, France.

The process has highlighted issues Mennonites have frequently dodged, thus exposing thin spots in theology and practice.

"We say decisive spiritual authority lies in the congregation or conference," Miller says. "But we haven't solved the problem of what to do when congregations or conferences have decisive disagreement. We don't have a well-developed theology of unity.

"The Catholics say decisive authority lies in the council of bishops. We don't like their answer, but I think we need to do more work on finding one that does make biblical sense to us."

The meetings have also provided an opening for exchange at local levels. Blough says that is the key to success. "The dialogue needs to foster local and regional counterparts, or it will have little real effect," he says.

At the meeting, Vatican representative and Philadelphia bishop Joseph Martino reported on conversations he has had with Freeman Miller, a Lancaster Conference bishop in the city. Joan Back of Rome, another Vatican delegate, said she reads *Courier,* MWC's periodical. "Whenever I see a page in *Courier* about a country, I send it to our people in that country," she said.

MWC representative Mario Higueros of Guatemala said he received a mixed response from other Mennonites when he shared about interactions with the Catholics.

"Some were astonished, others were skeptical, some were happy," he said. "The reaction in Latin America is divided because, in many places, the situation is still one of confrontation."

Mennonites and Roman Catholics in Strasbourg last year held their first official dialogue since the 16th-century separation of the Reformation. A third meeting will be held next November. Themes will be "The Impact of the Constantinian Shift on the Church" with case studies on conversion, baptism and violence, and "What Is a Peace Church?"

At its July 2000 meeting, the MWC General Council will discuss the results of the international dialogues and offer guidance to the Mennonite delegation for the remaining gatherings. At the conclusion of five years of conversation, MWC and the Vatican will issue a joint report.—*MWC News Service*

Email behind surge in magazine letters

Letter writing is experiencing a revival among readers of a Mennonite children's magazine, thanks in part to email.

On the Line, for children ages 9 to 14, in September received a record of more than 300 notes and responses, says editor Mary Clemens Meyer. And about two-thirds of them came via email.

Most of the messages are in response to the magazine's "Find the Line" contest, which awards five prizes a month.

But Meyer also reports an upswing in requests for pen pals. When she started as editor in 1990, the magazine received about one request every six months. "Now there are six to eight or more a month," she says.

MCC donates food, funds for India cyclone victims

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is planning a $322,000 response to help victims of the Oct. 29 "supercyclone" that struck the eastern Indian state of Orissa.

MCC will provide 500 metric tons of wheat plus $122,500 for the purchase of another 500 metric tons for a food-for-work program run by an agency of the Council of Churches in India. The program is expected to employ 13,500 people for 15 days. Each person will earn about 11 pounds of food per day for their work of cleaning sand and debris from wells, fish ponds and fields.

In addition, MCC workers in India have asked for $77,000 so they can respond to requests for help.

MCC is also helping provide $10,000 worth of bleach and lime to decontaminate water sources, water purification tablets, oral rehydration solutions, medications, tarps and food.

The death toll from the cyclone could rise into the tens of thousands, and many people have been left homeless. The storm produced winds of more than 160 miles per hour and was followed by flooding caused by three days of heavy rain.—*MCC News Service*

Correction: Doug Kaufman's name was misspelled in the Oct. 26 issue.

Breaking bondage, lifting oppression

Intercessory prayer focus for EMM Thailand workers

I'm convinced more and more of the need to pray for the big picture and not only for individuals.

—John Hertzler

UBON RATCHATHANI, Thailand—From temple heights to the depths of sexual immorality, Eastern Mennonite Mission (EMM) workers are getting a lot of practice in intercessory prayer.

"We feel that intercession led by the Spirit of God needs to be a significant focus for our team," says Carol Tobin, who, with her husband, Skip, has coordinated EMM's Thailand work for seven years.

A three-member Youth Evangelism Service (YES) group is working alongside EMM's seven long-term workers. Several events have recently fortified their prayer focus.

In September, team members trekked an hour and a half to an ancient Khmer temple on the Thailand-Cambodia border. They climbed four levels to the top of the complex, stopping to sing and pray at each level.

"It was an amazing experience to worship the one true God on the very ground where untold acts of worship were offered to evil spirits and false gods," says Tasha Liechty, a YES team member from Bourbon, Ind. "We prayed to break the bondage in which the national people still live."

Says John Hertzler, YES team leader from Elverson, Pa.: "I'm convinced more and more of the need to pray for the big picture and not only for individuals."

Two weeks after the border prayer trip, Hertzler and the Tobins attended a "Prophetic Intercession" conference in Bangkok, which was attended by about 200 people. The conference was sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand, a network of hundreds of Thai congregations and more than 120 Protestant organizations in the country working together to reach Thais with the gospel.

The conference included a spontaneous service involving symbolic identification with and repentance for the cycle of prostitution in Thailand.

"A Thai pastor came forward, asking that the foreigners present say a representative apology for the involvement of people from their nations in the abuse of Thai women through prostitution," Carol Tobin says. "They came forward obediently enough, but as they began to speak out the apologies, the Spirit of God took over and dumped on them all the emotions of deep remorse that would fittingly be present. They doubled over with weeping, and anyone praying along was caught up in it, too."

Men from various countries confessed the sin of other men from their nations who come to Thailand to engage in sexual immorality. A Thai father asked for forgiveness on behalf of the fathers and families who sell their daughters into prostitution for financial gain. Thai women then came forward to speak "proxy forgiveness," Tobin says.

"My heart was overjoyed to see all that the Holy Spirit was doing," Hertzler says, "and I was grateful to be able to participate in such a significant, historic moment."

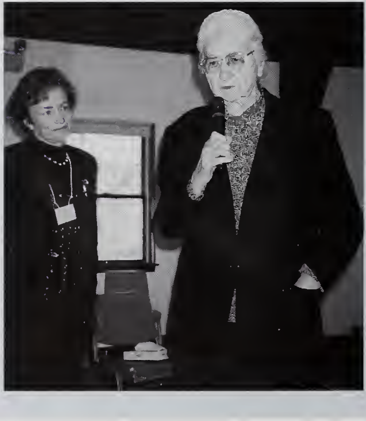
The Thailand YES team last month had a second opportunity to intercede at a temple. Before entering Doi Su Thep, one of Thailand's most prominent Buddhist temples, team members spent time praying for those in their midst.

"We stood at the entrance as if we were talking to one another," Hertzler says, "while binding the works of darkness and praying for freedom for the people whose belief system tells them this is the way to make merit for a better reincarnated life. Some tourists looked at us strangely because they could understand our English, but we just kept on quietly praying."

Says Tobin: "There is much intercessory groundwork for us to be involved in at this stage of our church work. Does this kind of prayer lift oppression and change things in the spiritual realm? It certainly feels like it does."
—Kristin Oberholtzer of EMM News Service

Story time

Ruth Brunk Stoltzfus of Harrisonburg, Va., shares a story while Lee Schmucker of Wichita, Kan., looks on during an Oct. 22-24 retreat, "Women in Conversation: Seeking and Sharing Wisdom," hosted by Laurelville Mennonite Retreat Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa. The retreat, attended by 50 women, was sponsored by Laurelville and Mennonite Women.



MCC workers: Racism part of immigration issue

AKRON, Pa.—If the church is going to provide effective assistance to immigrants, it will need to overcome racism and apathy born out of the white middle class of North America, says a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) administrator.

"When the Kosovo conflict took over headlines, there was immediate interest from Anglo Mennonite churches about whether MCC would support some of those refugees," says Iris de León Hartshorn, director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries. "The Kosovo refugees were funded by the U.S. government. In contrast, we are working with people who are undocumented. They have no avenues to legal help and have no sponsors. I find that we don't get those concerns … about people of color."

While maybe not an issue for the white community, it is for Africans, Hispanics and others. "Perhaps the larger Mennonite church doesn't know that we do have churches that have large numbers of undocumented folks," says Rebeca Jiménez Yoder, an MCC U.S. staff worker on immigration issues.—*MCC News Service*

$100,000 grant to benefit campus construction

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College has received a $100,000 grant from the Sunderland Foundation of Overland Park for new campus construction. The gift will help fund the North Newton school's new residence hall, which is under construction, and the new Krehbiel Science Center, scheduled to be built next year. The grant also puts Bethel within $1.1 million of reaching the Mabee Foundation challenge grant that is due April 20.

"This gift goes a long way to undergirding Bethel's academic and student life," says Bethel president Douglas Penner.

Authors invited to Washington literary event

WASHINGTON—Two Mennonite authors from Lancaster, Pa., have been selected for the National Press Club's prestigious annual Author's Night on Nov. 18 in Washington. Phyllis Pellman Good, author of *Quilts from Two Valleys: Amish Quilts from the Big Valley, Mennonite Quilts from the Shenandoah Valley,* and her daughter, Kate Good, with whom she wrote *Mennonite Recipes from the Shenandoah Valley,* will join more than 90 other authors at the event.

Others invited authors include Jack Anderson, Michael Isikoff, Don Knotts, Deborah Norville, Diane Rehm, Phyllis Richman and Helen Thomas. More than 1,500 other attendees are expected.

by the way …

The three football-playing Mennonite colleges have sent five players to major professional football leagues (NFL, AFL or USFL): one from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and two each from Bluffton (Ohio) College and Tabor College, a Mennonite Brethren school in Hillsboro, Kan.

Columbia Bible College announces opening for

Youth/Mission Faculty Position

CBC is an accredited Bible College in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada with a student body of about 400. It is an evangelical Anabaptist College cosponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in BC and the Mennonite Brethren Churches of BC.

The desired teaching expertise is in the area of Youth Work (with Mission expertise preferred).

Qualifications include a Masters Degree with a major in a related field; theological education and knowledge of Anabaptist theology and history preferred; agreement with Columbia's Mission and Confessional statements; willingness to be a member of a sponsoring conference church; at least 5 years of experience in ministry; some teaching experience preferred.

For a copy of job description or other documents, please contact Dr. Ron Penner at Columbia Bible College, 2940 Clearbrook Rd, Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8. Ph. (604) 853-3567 ext. 316 Fax (604) 853-3063 Email rpenner@columbiabc.edu Website www.columbiabc.edu

Please forward resume to attention of Dr. Ron Penner by February 15, 2000 although we will accept resumes until post is filled. Starting date: Summer 2000.

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Births

Boehr, Connor Reid, Oct. 26, to Dana (Buller) and Greg Boehr, Henderson, Neb.

Buller, Aaron Lynn, Oct. 27, to Gary and Jennifer (Hess) Buller, Henderson, Neb.

Cooprider, Michael Ross, Oct. 8, to Barry and Bobbie Jo (Roberts) Cooprider, Hutchinson, Kan.

Epp, Wesley Derstine, Sept. 21, to Curt and Sarah (Derstine) Epp, McPherson, Kan.

Eveler, Owen David, Sept. 26, to Mark and Tonya (Graber) Eveler, Goshen, Ind.

Fox, Braden James, Oct. 29, to Jonathan Fox and Kimberly Turrill, Jeannette, Pa.

Harder, Anna Katherine Nofsinger, Oct. 16, to Lois and Tom Nofsinger Harder, Elkhart, Ind.

Holdeman, Christian Michael Lynn, Oct. 20, to Lynne and Roger Holdeman, Kalona, Iowa.

Jost, Evan Daniel, Sept. 19, to Kathy Holm and Scott Jost, Harrisonburg, Va.

Lehman, Ellena Noele, Oct. 13, to Heather (Beale) and Ryan Lehman, Davidsville, Pa.

Martin, Benjamin Noah, Oct. 16, to Brent and Susan (Gingerich) Martin, New Hamburg, Ont.

Murch, Jonathan Gabriel, Oct. 23, to Jennifer (Kurtz) and John Murch, Managua, Nicaragua.

Powell, Stephan James, Oct. 8, to Bruce and Patricia (Mayger) Powell, Newport, Wa.

Saunders, Caleb Alexander, Oct. 13, to Joslyn (Hostetter) and Nick Saunders, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

Schlabach, Daniel James Stromme, Oct. 14, to Jim and Shirley (Stromme) Schlabach, Millersburg, Ohio.

Marriages

Beebee/Janssen: Melody Beebee, Wellsville, N.Y., and John Janssen, Scipio, N.Y., Oct. 9 at Victory Baptist Church, Rochester, N.Y.

Bigler/Ritchie: Adam Bigler, Goshen, Ind., and Jamie Ritchie, Middlebury, Ind., Oct. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Laucher/Rohrer: Diana Laucher, Medina, Ohio, and Jason Rohrer, Wadsworth, Ohio, Sept. 25 at First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth.

Deaths

Alderfer, Ada, 85, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 22. Spouse: Mahlon Alderfer (deceased). Parents: Vincent and Mary Ellen Moyer (deceased). Survivors: children Clarence, Richard, Lowell; eight grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Bitikofer, Melvin, 87, Albany, Ore., died Oct. 6. Spouse: Cora Bond Bitikofer (deceased). Parents: Fred and Martha Loucks Bitikofer (deceased). Survivors: children Melvin Jr., Merle, Ervin, Phares, Thelma Martin, Eudene Snyder, Maxine Stoltzfus; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 10 at Western Mennonite Chapel, Salem, Ore.

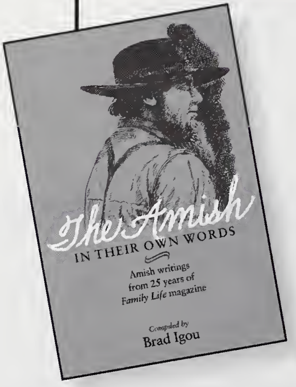
Claassen, Meribeth Nachtigal, 72, North Newton, Kan., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Henry Claassen (deceased). Parents: G. A. and Esther Mouttet Nachtigal (deceased). Survivors: children Tom, Victor, Margaret Toews, Susan Jantzen; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 30 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Engle, Lynne, 20, Genesee, Pa., died Oct. 19 by drowning from a car accident. Parents: Frank and Mary Engle. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Yorks Corners Mennonite Church, Wellsville, N.Y.

Engle, Michael, 1, Genesee, Pa., died Oct. 19 by drowning from a car accident. Grandparents: Frank and Mary Engle. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Yorks Corners Mennonite Church, Wellsville, N.Y.

Friesen, Maleta Epp, 81, Henderson, Neb., died Oct. 22. Spouse: Albert Friesen. Parents: Henry and Maria Friesen Epp (deceased). Other survivors: children Betty Weisheit, Lila Bender, Madeline Hight; 10 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Good, Jacob, 90, Lancaster, Pa., died Oct. 15. Spouse: Naomi Good. Parents: Jacob and Sarah Martin Good (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Pauline Baker, Sara Jane Witmer, Mary Ann Lafferty; stepchildren Lester Neff, Larry Neff; 20 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at New Holland (Pa.) Mennonite Church.



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Holderread, Rachel Schiffler, 83, Corvallis, Ore., died Oct. 11. Spouse: Wilbur Henry Holderread. Parents: John and Katie Lapp Schiffler (deceased). Other survivors: children Carolyn Heggen, Cathryn Passmore, David, Marilyn Pulgar; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 14 at Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Hostetler, Wilbur, 84, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 13 of complications following heart surgery. Spouse: Velma Leichty Hostetler. Parents: John and Clara Miller Hostetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Carolyn Bauman, Wayne; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 16 at Shipshewana, Ind.

Landis, Marvin, 94, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 19. Spouse: Marion Krupp Landis. Parents: Allen and Mattie Kulp Landis (deceased). Other survivors: Joan Alderfer, Merrill, Glenn; six grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 22 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Lantz, Eloise Kast, 69, Wauseon, Ohio, died Oct. 20. Spouse: Lewis Lantz Jr. Parents: George and Marjorie Kast (deceased). Other survivors: children Susan Henricks, Sandra, Kathleen, Demaline, Barbara Allen, Ronald, David, James; 20 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Lyons, Ohio.

Miller, Barney, 85, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Oct. 22 of a heart attack. Spouse: Helen Miller. Parents: Rudy and Cora Oswald Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Lillian Gatten, Marlene, Mary Troyer, Bob, Gary; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Roth, Esther Martin, 89, Morton, Ill., died Oct. 21. Spouse: Elmer Roth (deceased). Parents: Peter and Maggie Smetter Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Norm, Gene, Darlene; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Roth, Susie Miller, 100, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Daniel Roth (deceased). Parents: Uriah and Barbara Kauffman Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce, Howard, Claron; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 30 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Scott, Harry Jr., 78, Louisville, Ohio, died Oct. 11. Spouse: Betty Scott. Parents: Harry and Evelyn Scott (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Krabill, Lecia Reed, Evelyn Wilson, Harry III; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Louisville.

Stutzman, George Edwin, 74, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Oct. 13. Spouse: Maxine Hershberger Stutzman. Parents: Erwin and Martha Mast Stutzman (deceased). Other survivors: children Roland, Tim, Maurice, Merle, Mark; 12 grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 17 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Wedel, Arnold C., 88, North Newton, Kan., died Sept. 12. Spouse: (1st) Edna Kaufman Wedel (deceased); (2nd) Marie Schrag Wedel. Parents: Henry and Maggie Wiens Wedel (deceased). Other survivors: son Anthony; stepson Tony; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: Sept. 15 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Weldy, Harold, 80, Wakarusa, Ind., died Oct. 19. Spouse: Virginia Weldy. Other survivors: children Susan Weaver, Sara Reynolds, Sherry Meyers, Sandra, Michael, Henry, Dan; 14 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa.

Zimmerman, Mary, 83, Lititz, Pa., died Sept. 19. Parents: Willis and Anna Mae Denlinger Zimmerman (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 22 at Landis Home Chapel, Lititz.

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classifieds

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Dec. 3, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship**, a small, urban, mission-oriented Anabaptist church committed to living the gospel in New York City, seeks a half-time ***pastor***. Inquire: Kathleen Birkey, 324 E. 61st St. Apt. 5RW, New York, NY 10021; 212-702-8698; email fellowship@mennohouse.com; website www.mennohouse.com

- **Menno House**, live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2000. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Mennonite Your Way Tours** seeks ***secretary*** 20-25 hours per week. Responsibilities include tour planning. Skills necessary: typing, phone contacts, detail work, organization, basic computer. Flexible daytime hours. Position begins January. Office near Mt. Joy, Pa.

  Contact Leon or Nancy Stauffer, P.O. Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538; 717-653-1111.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***Bible instructor*** to teach biblical studies courses in the general curriculum and Pastoral Ministries Program. Desired qualities: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to the Mennonite church. Master's degree minimum. Teaching and pastoral experience preferred. Full-time position available August 2000. Application review begins Jan. 10, 2000.

  Send resume and references to Marc Yoder, academic dean, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8206 or email marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Bethel College** seeks an ***associate director of development***. Responsibilities include identification and cultivation of donor prospects, and leadership in the college's annual fund, capital fund and planned giving programs. Qualifications: interpersonal, public presentation and organizational skills; self-direction; familiarity with Bethel constituency; strong advocacy for Bethel College; commitment to beliefs and values of the Mennonite faith; experience in or closely related to development or advancement fields.

  Submit resume and cover letter to Sondra Koontz, director of advancement, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th, North Newton, KS 67117; email skoontz@bethelks.edu

- **Prairie View Inc.,** a church-related, regional behavioral health system based in Newton, Kan., is seeking a ***nurse executive***. This management position will be responsible for staff, programs and program development for a 60-bed unit including inpatient, partial and residential services. Minimum master's nursing degree, leadership and management experience, and CNS in psych/mental health field helpful. Competitive salary and benefits.

  Submit resume to Yvonne Sieber, vice president, Physical & Human Resources, P.O. Box 467, Newton, KS 67114; 800-362-0180; fax 316-284-6491. EOE

- **Camp Friedenswald** seeks an ***executive director***, beginning on or before spring 2000. The executive director is responsible for oversight of year-round program and staff, management of $.75 million budget, camp promotion and fund raising. Candidate should have prior management experience, marketing and fund-raising knowledge, and a willingness to embrace the camp's long-term strategic plan. Compensation includes salary, housing and utilities, and comprehensive medical insurance.

  Interested parties should submit a resume and reference list to the camp board chairperson: Lori Nester, 103 N. Lawn Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; email nesterl@bluffton.edu. Deadline to apply is Dec. 15, 1999.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for full-time, tenure track ***apparel and textiles merchandizing and design*** position beginning fall 2000. Ph.D. preferred in apparel and textiles or family and consumer sciences with demonstrated teaching ability in apparel and textiles. Teach undergraduate courses in apparel and textiles, introductory interior design, human resource management and human ecology. Provide leadership for apparel, textile and merchandizing program, including student recruitment and advising, and internship supervision. Review of applications begins Jan. 10, 2000, and continues until an appointment is made. For further information see http://www.bluffton.edu

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the academic dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Immediate opening** for ***conference minister of youth/young adults***: Indiana-Michigan Conference (MC) and the eastern half of Central District Conference (GC) are seeking a full-time conference minister of youth and young adults. The person filling this position will serve as congregational consultant and resource coordinator to congregational leaders in ministry with junior high, high school and young adults. This person will be a member of the conferences' ministry teams. Pastoral training and experience are preferred. All interested inquiries are to be received by Jan. 15, 2000. An information packet concerning this position is available upon request.

  Please send a completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (MLI available from any conference office) to: John Hockman, search committee chairperson, P.O. Box 156, Topeka, IN 46571; 219-593-2389; fax 219-593-2150; email hockman@topekanet.com

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a Christian urban day school K-8, seeks ***principal*** for the 2000-2001 school year who has commitment to the vision of providing quality Christian education with an Anabaptist emphasis in the ethnic and economic diversity of the city. Responsibilities include general administration, business management, educational supervision, supervision of overall maintenance, and assistance in fund development. Administrator supervises staff of 12-16, coordinates volunteer services and reports to board of directors. Desirable qualifications: teaching and administrative experience, master's degree in education or related field and active membership in Mennonite or other Anabaptist church.

  Send letter of application and current resume to Search Committee, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For further information, call Leanne Schertz, board president, 309-383-2451.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** will host the 13th annual ***Music and Worship Leaders Weekend*** Jan. 14-16, 2000. Special guest is John Bell from the Iona Community in Scotland, who will guide an exploration of Iona Community worship and Celtic traditions. Other leaders are Ken Nafziger, Marlene Kropf and Marilyn Houser Hamm. Discounts available for groups and early registration. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for registration information.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** has an opening for a ***regional vice president*** to manage a regional office in Lancaster, Pa. Responsible to develop the region by establishing and achieving sales and customer satisfaction goals in conjunction with corporate needs, to recruit and select new sales counselors, and to provide regional financial management including office budget. Qualified candidates will have a bachelor's degree (MBA desired), proven management experience (preferably in sales), strong interpersonal skills with the ability to supervise and motivate others, ability to become licensed in life and health insurance and securities; sales experience desired, active member of an Anabaptist congregation essential. Compensation is base salary plus bonus.

  Send or fax resume to Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** seeks a ***director of information technology*** to be responsible for computer-based information systems including a local area network, 60 PCs running Windows 95 and related applications software. The director will provide leadership and long-range planning for campus computing and will be a resource to faculty in implementing instructional technology. The successful candidate will have strong organizational skills and a passion for serving the church by implementing appropriate uses of computer technology in support of the AMBS mission to prepare Mennonite church leaders.

  This is a full-time position beginning July 1, 2000. Applicants interested in part-time employment for a portion of these duties are encouraged to apply. To apply, send letter of application and resume to Virgil Claassen, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; email vclaassen@ambs.edu. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

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EASTERN MENNONITE SEMINARY
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by Gordon Houser

Americans love privacy. Or do we? Often you may hear arguments about "the right to privacy," about the threats to that right from various corners.

Some feel, however, that the problem may be in the opposite direction. Too much privacy has invaded the public sphere, leaving little that is truly public.

In an article in *The New Yorker* (Oct. 12, 1998), Jonathan Franzen argues that "Americans care about privacy mainly in the abstract." People don't get up in arms about threats to privacy because, he writes, "we're flat-out *drowning* in privacy."

Credit card companies know about our private lives from our purchases. The media let us know about the private sins of the president. You can hardly go to a restaurant without hearing someone talking on a cell phone.

It's not privacy but public spaces that elude us, writes Franzen. He defines a genuine public space as "a place where every citizen is welcome to be present, and where the purely private is excluded or restricted." Franzen offers an example: "One reason that attendance at art museums has soared in recent years is that museums still feel public in this way."

Ask yourself if you feel overwhelmed by the private sphere. Is your church a welcome, public space?

From our readers:

A couple of people responded to my list of "top 10 fictional works of this century with Christian themes" with their own choices. A debatable point, and one worth debating, is what qualifies as a work with Christian themes.

Robert Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas, recommends Willa Cather's novels, particularly *My Antonia* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. "In Cather's works," he writes, "she is always looking for sparks of virtue, honorable ambition and real excellence in people."

Joan Gerig, Chicago, laments the absence of more women and people of color from the list. She mentions the following works as worthy of inclusion: *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver, *Evensong* by Gail Godwin, *While I Was Gone* by Sue Miller, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, *Kindred* by Octavia Butler, *The House of the Spirits* by Isabel Allende, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe and *When Rain Clouds Gather* by Bessie Head.

I invite other readers to send their recommendations. May we all be inspired to read such fine works as these.—*gh*

Fasting from the media, part 2

by Ted Lewis

Consider the ravens … they have [no] storehouse.—Luke 12:24

I struggle with clutter in my life: papers sprawled out over my desk, junk piling up in the porch, too much memorabilia. Even my schedule feels cluttered. Occasionally the excess bids me create order out of disorder, and I feel better. But the act of shedding and reorganizing takes time, and I resent the demands that clutter makes on my life.

Mass media also make demands on my life. Countless images and a legion of messages get stacked up in the various closets of my mind. It's too much. Some of it is good; some of it is garbage. Like junk mail, something has to be done with it. This quantity factor is at odds with the virtue of simplicity.

In the 1700s, John Woolman's fitting word for clutter was "cumber." He wrote in his *Journal*, "I want to live more free from outward cumbers … and cumbering affairs." It's a good kingdom of God concept, and it applies well to the way mass media can encumber our mental environment. In the context of considering lilies and ravens, Jesus said that our lives "[do] not consist in the abundance of possessions" (Luke 12:15). Today Jesus might have added, "in the abundance of our media consumption."

Fasting from television and other forms of mass media has been one way for me to simplify my life. Refraining from anything can become legalistic, a burdensome yoke. But when choices of detachment free us to live fuller lives, we can become joyful stewards of our time. It's like trading in a cumbersome yoke for one that is easy and well-fashioned to fit us.

Ted Lewis lives in Pawnee Rock, Kan.

books

Invitation to the Classics, edited by Louise Cowan and Os Guinness (Baker, 1998, $34.99) includes concise, readable and stimulating introductions to about 70 of the world's greatest books and authors. One may quibble with which works are included, but the biggies are here, from Augustine to Austen, Dante to Dostoevsky, Chaucer to Faulkner. In her introductory essay, "The Importance of the Classics," Cowan claims the classics "summon us to belief." They constitute, she writes, "an almost infallible process for awakening the soul to its full stature." The best thing about this book is that it makes you want to read the classics themselves, which are, writes Guinness, their own best argument.

films

American Beauty (R) is a disturbing yet ultimately hopeful look at the dysfunctions of suburban America. It blends satire, tragedy and comedy to show how the greatest sin in America—being ordinary—can become beautiful. Like good literature, it portrays each lonely, wounded character as complex. It's not to everyone's taste, but it may be the best American film in years.

The Dinner Game (PG-13) is a hilarious French film about elitists who invite "idiots" to dinner to mock them. A publisher's life begins unraveling when his "idiot" tries to help him. While mostly fun, the film indirectly comments on the harsh, arbitrary divisions of society.

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Rich Preheim

Six billion responsibilities of child-dedication services

> *We promise, with humility and seriousness, to share in your child's nurture and well-being. We will support, by our example and words, your efforts to provide a loving and caring home.*
> —Hymnal: A Worship Book 791

In the wee hours of Oct. 12, a baby boy was born in a hospital in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and immediately christened as the 6 billionth human being on earth.

The next day, in an all-too-common display of political partisanship, the U.S. Senate shot down the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, an international agreement to ban all nuclear test explosions worldwide.

Happy birthday, Baby 6B.

What the Senate did should ruin anybody's party. Here was a chance to publicly declare support for a measure to make the world just a bit better for babies as well as children and adults. It's a world that 51 senators, by virtue of their vote against trying to curb the development of nuclear weapons, apparently don't want for themselves and their subsequent generations.

It's also questionable whether the U.S. population wants such a world. Not only did our elected officials do nothing to lessen the specter of mushroom clouds and military idolatry, we seemingly don't care. Less than half of Americans had any idea the vote took place, according to a recent survey.

Ignorant and apathetic is not the way to go through life, particularly the Christian life, which is supposed to be conducted according to biblical precepts.

Ignorant and apathetic is not the way to go through life, particularly the Christian life, which is supposed to be conducted according to biblical precepts such as love your neighbor, love your enemy and generally be good stewards of God's creation.

Baby 6B's birth underscores that. The arrival of new life is frequently a time of joy and hope. It is also a reminder of the responsibilities of community to support that new life. That is, after all, one reason we conduct child-dedication services. Now we have more life to support in this world. More babies, more children, more adults to whom we need to dedicate ourselves.

While everyone is obligated, Christians are especially called to such work. The basis of our efforts, of course, is our faith in a gracious God, whose love we are to reflect to the ends of the earth. It was all made good, and now God calls the world back to the goodness and wholeness that only the Creator can provide.

There are many people who have yet to hear that invitation. By one estimate, there are 181 ethnic and/or language groups in 47 countries—more than 10 million people—waiting to hear God's good news but that are not part of any mission organization's plans for the next three years.

But there is more to our work than simply helping a person believe in the salvation offered by Jesus Christ. As the headline of a recent editorial in *Christianity Today* proclaimed, "Make disciples, not just converts." Christ is indeed our Savior and Redeemer. But he is more than that. He is our teacher, our example of how to live: feed the hungry, heal the sick, welcome the stranger.

So we will need to tell the good news to Baby 6B. But we will also need to try to provide him a world of safety and security. "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?" James asks. "If one of you says to [a person], 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?" (James 2:14,16 NIV)

And the physical needs requiring our attention are great: Sixteen percent of the world's population consumes 80 percent of its natural resources; in the United States alone, each person consumes about 50 times more goods and services than the average Chinese. More than half the world's people are malnourished and living in poverty. More than 30 million people have been forced from their homes as refugees and asylum seekers. Violence is still the world's preferred way of addressing conflict, as found in East Timor, Colombia and Baby 6B's very own Bosnia, in workplace shootings in Honolulu and Seattle, and in the Senate's refusal to pass the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

No matter how overwhelming the litany of needs, we are required look after the spiritual and physical dimensions of this world, both next door and across the ocean. That's one reason we have child-dedication services. God and 6 billion people require it.—*rp*

the Mennonite

November 23, 1999

Y 22 '99

Mary Bosack (left), Pittsburgh, talks with Alan Kreider, Oxford, England, in Göreme, Turkey. Kreider is a Mennonite mission worker and was a Reconciliation Walk lecturer on early Christian worship and theology.

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a walk for reconciliation

8 We're all in the same boat
10 Italian Mennonites celebrate 50 years
13 Publishing merger put on fast track
20 Keep your fork

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Nothing to be afraid of

Re "Lancaster to Grant Credentials for Women Ministers but Reaffirms Male Headship in Church Structures" (Nov. 2): I find this not only disheartening to Mennonites in general but especially for the women of Lancaster Conference. How long will we choose to keep women as second-class citizens in the church? It seems inconceivable that we continue to make choices that degrade half of our church population.

As a woman, I am concerned with the statement from Sam Thomas, "My hope is ... we can feel safe with women in leadership." Is there any reason to be scared of us? I challenge the men and women who feel that ordaining women as pastors in the Mennonite church is wrong. I think it is more about personal insecurity than biblical context.—*Katrina Toews, Riverdale, Md.*

Worse than war

Should Mennonites in Germany under Hitler have paid taxes to build gas ovens and concentration camps? Did German taxpayers bear any personal responsibility for the Holocaust? If your tax dollars burned homes and killed families on your street, would you pay? Are our neighbors abroad less precious, less human than neighbors on our streets?

For a U.S. Mennonite who claims to oppose war to pay federal income tax to train other men and women to be professional killers to murder on command is, in a way, more evil than being a soldier oneself. Mennonite conscientious objectors who pay war taxes never risk coming home paralyzed, blind or dead from battle, have no lifetime terrifying memories of soldier buddies beside them being blown to bits, no hellish nightmares of "enemy" children and grandparents pleading for mercy before being bombed.

For 20 years I have paid no federal income tax. I refuse to pay for other Americans to rob, torture and murder millions of our sisters and brothers worldwide. How can I work for peace if I pay for war? How can I live Jesus' Golden Rule if I pay for war?—*Don Schrader, Albuquerque, N.M.*

Family values

When members of our family do something that we strongly disapprove of, even a sin that we believe will bring them to disaster, we will certainly explain to them the reasons for our disapproval (which they probably already know). But we will not disinherit them in order that others will know that our family does not approve of such behavior.

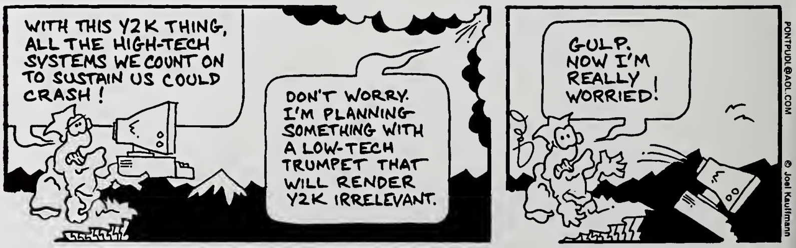
If they want to come to our family reunions (which should be a compliment), that doesn't imply that we have changed our position and now approve of what they are doing. It would simply mean that we still love them in spite of what they are doing. While they are there, will they be a bad influence on the younger members of our family? Or will those members remember that we loved the wayward ones anyway and that they will probably always be loved.

If we are sure that everybody knows our family values, is there any need to cast them out to prove it?—*Daniel Slabaugh, Toledo, Ohio*

Attracting opposites

We may not want to admit it, but the current controversy regarding integration, membership, homosexuality and church discipline is politics. Politics is not just what happens in legislatures but also in our workplaces, families and even the church. Politics is what happens when well-meaning, sincere and otherwise like-minded people of a group disagree on

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann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Vol. 2, No. 44, November 23, 1999

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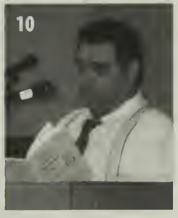

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for March 30, June 29, Aug. 3 and Nov. 30 in 1999—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the Interim Periodical Board, the General Conference Mennonite Church or the Mennonite Church.

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readers say

what is the right thing to do. But politics has also been called "the art of the possible." This is where we must become both creative and reasonable. And this is where we must become the most selfless and the least polarized. Along this line I offer two suggestions to the brothers and sisters at the poles:

1. To those who might have the new Mennonite Church change its widely adopted confession of faith and accept homosexual behavior as essentially morally equivalent to heterosexual marriage: Forget it. It's a loser. It won't play in Peoria, and it seems to be counterproductive to continue to hold to such an argument of moral equivalency in pleading for the inclusion of openly gay and lesbian Christians and their congregations in the new denomination.

2. To those who would exclude openly gay or lesbian Christians (or who might even deny that such a combination can exist) from fellowship in the church, I would ask, "What would Jesus do?" I do not have the New Testament committed to memory, but I cannot recall a single case where Jesus refused fellowship to anyone who came to him. Even the rich young ruler was not sent away. Jesus dined with Pharisees, tax collectors, men of violence and women of questionable repute alike.

The new Mennonite Church, as a denomination, will not change its teaching or confession of faith regarding sex, love and marriage. If gay brothers and sisters are willing to live with that official disapproval, then why can't they take their place beside the liars, the greedy, the gossips, the resentful, the sexually impure, the sinners among us? To fellowship, must we agree on every moral norm? Is that possible?

For this issue to block the coming together of two consenting partners is unnecessary. There's no good reason for it.—*Robert Bristow-Johnson, Glen Ridge, N.J.*

Cover photo by Reconciliation Walk

Strong conviction needed

Dustin Miller's letter (Oct. 19) expresses a fear of leadership that voices an opinion. Have we emasculated our ministers to the point where their opinions are considered dangerous? What would we do if one of them would actually speak out with strong convictions, especially if it upholds morality? And what if it was done by a woman? Could we then resist the name calling and labeling, or would we foment a rebellion such as Corah against Moses? A government from the bottom up has some desirable qualities, but unfortunately it can also produce fearful leaders and eventually lead to lawlessness.

The apostle Paul "solemnly urges you ministers to preach the word of God urgently ... correct and rebuke your people when they need it, encourage them to do right ... for there is going to come a time when people won't listen to the truth ... but will blithely follow their own misguided ideas" (2 Timothy 4:1-3, Living Bible). This takes not only an opinion but strong conviction and boldness, especially in the times we live in.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

Enemies of the church

Ronald Woelk's attitude of "religious cleansing" (Readers Say, Oct. 5) assumes that any belief or action should be tolerated by the church. His own admission of 56 years of military service with no termination or regrets indicates that he does not accept or agree with the doctrine of nonresistance as taught by Jesus and in Article 22 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. I wonder why Woelk even wants to be a member of the Mennonite church.

No church is 100 percent pure, but we have biblical standards whereby we judge what is right and wrong. We must continue to teach against sin and make our confessions for forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord. Those who are trying to justify behavior that has long been declared sinful by the church are enemies of the church and should be recognized as such.—*Alvin Bontrager, Topeka, Ind.*

Slow down

I hope Walter Klassen is wrong when he has S.F. Coffman passing into heaven in 1935 ("Love Casts Out Fear," Oct. 26). As a young boy, I was enthralled by the song-leading antics of this giant of God. And by his snowy hair and long, black frock coat. But I was born eight years after his death, as reported by Klassen. As I find my 56th birthday looming, I know I am zooming into old age; please do not floor the accelerator! Was it maybe 1953 that he died?—*Robert Koch, Colorado Springs, Colo.*

Editor's note: Coffman died in 1954.

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Fortune

for Doña Chonita

by Rachel Beth Miller

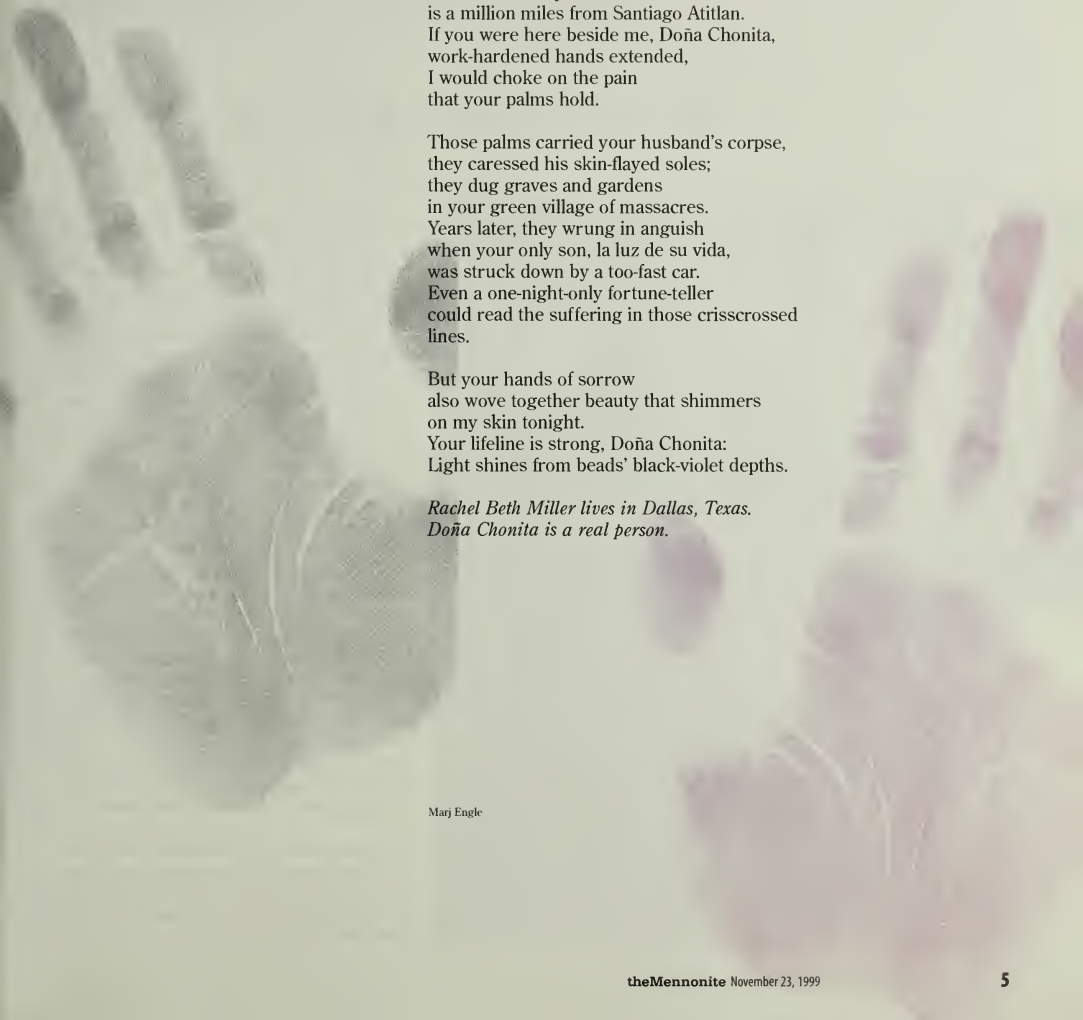
Tonight I am a fortune-teller.
The bead necklace I bought from you
glimmers in the lights of this Halloween party
as I gaze at outstretched palms
and dispense pretend prophecy:
you will travel to a distant land;
you will have three love affairs.

This buzz and sparkle
is a million miles from Santiago Atitlan.
If you were here beside me, Doña Chonita,
work-hardened hands extended,
I would choke on the pain
that your palms hold.

Those palms carried your husband's corpse,
they caressed his skin-flayed soles;
they dug graves and gardens
in your green village of massacres.
Years later, they wrung in anguish
when your only son, la luz de su vida,
was struck down by a too-fast car.
Even a one-night-only fortune-teller
could read the suffering in those crisscrossed
lines.

But your hands of sorrow
also wove together beauty that shimmers
on my skin tonight.
Your lifeline is strong, Doña Chonita:
Light shines from beads' black-violet depths.

Rachel Beth Miller lives in Dallas, Texas.
Doña Chonita is a real person.



Marj Engle

A walk to heal 900-year-old wounds

by Gordon Houser

Many consider the Crusades ancient history, but for descendants of the victims of crusaders, the pain lingers. When he received from Christians an apology for the destruction wrought by the Crusades, Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau of Jerusalem said, "Better late than never." Then he blessed the group in Hebrew and English from Psalm 118:26: "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."

> **I would have considered myself an optimistic dreamer if I had thought four years ago that the Reconciliation Walk would go this well.**
>
> *—Lynn Green, Reconciliation Walk international director*

On July 15—the 900th anniversary of the slaughter of thousands of Jews, Muslims and Orthodox Christians in Jerusalem by crusaders claiming to act in the name of Christ—450 Christians from Europe and North America gathered in Jerusalem. They prayed "for the peace of Jerusalem" and asked forgiveness for the historical bloodshed and for a lingering "crusader mentality" in the church today. In successive visits, they delievered an apology to Chief Rabbi Lau, Greek Orthodox Patriarch Diodoros and Muslim Mufti Ekrem Sabri.

Jerusalem was the final station of the Reconciliation Walk (RW), which began with a prayer meeting on Nov. 27, 1995, in Clermont-Ferrand, France, on the 900th anniversary of Pope Urban II's call for Christendom to take up arms and go on crusade to Jerusalem. A total of 2,500 Western Christians—keeping roughly in step with the First Crusade—retraced the massacre trail of the crusaders from Cologne, Germany, through Turkey, Syria and Lebanon (see *The Mennonite*, May 19, 1998).

At the conclusion of the walk, Lynn Green, RW international director, said, "I would have considered myself an optimistic dreamer if I had thought four years ago that the Reconciliation Walk would go this well."

Cathy Brubaker Miles, Richmond, Va., a Mennonite who served on the RW staff, calls her time with the walk "intense, stretching, exciting, sobering, exhausting, fun and such a privilege." Her responsibilities as logistics coordinator included making sure everyone had a bed to sleep in.

At a concluding worship service in the Church of the Redeemer, next to the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City, RW training director Cathy Nobles said the personal encounters changed the participants as well as those they met. "Visiting people's homes has changed my view of the Middle East forever," she said. "Stereotypes like 'all Muslims are fundamentalist terrorists' vanish when you eat together and share your hopes and worries."

RW Middle East director Matthew Hand, who authored the apology presented to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, says: "As Christians we cannot put off behaving in a Christlike fashion until later. In particular, we are called to love our enemies at all times."

Gordon Houser is associate editor for features for The Mennonite. *This article is based on reports by Tomas Dixon in* Christianity Today, *Sept. 6 issue, and by Paul Klassen and Cathy Brubaker Miles.*

A meal of reconciliation

Perhaps the crowning moment of the day occurred when most of us had retired to our rooms. One group of participants had arranged to meet with a Palestinian Muslim friend, Hassam, from Hebron, for an evening meal. During the course of the day, these walkers had befriended a practicing Jew, Jeremiah, from France, whom they also invited to join them for the meal. At Hassam's insistence, they ate in the Arab quarter of town. At Jeremiah's insistence, the meal was cooked in a kosher fashion (which meant in this instance that he cooked the meat himself). In the presence of a number of intrigued Palestinians, Jeremiah went through his ritual washing ceremony, then said prayers of blessing over the meal. When it was time for us to leave, Hassam placed his hand on Jeremiah's shoulder and invited him to join the others of the group in a trip to Hebron the following evening. It is hard to imagine a more powerful symbol of reconciliation than this small group of Western Christians sharing a meal with an Orthodox Jew and a Palestinian Muslim in Jerusalem on the night of the 900th anniversary of the city's capture by the crusaders.—*Paul Klassen, Niagara, Ont.*

Kreider teaches walkers about reconciliation

Alan Kreider (left), director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at Regents Park College, Oxford University in Oxford, England, taught more than 40 Reconciliation Walk participants about the biblical foundations for reconciliation during a time of teaching in Göreme, Turkey. Alan travels widely, particularly to congregations active in the United Kingdom's Anabaptist Network, to speak on topics of discipleship, worship, mission and peacemaking. He and Eleanor, his wife, have served in England as Mennonite Board of Missions workers since 1974.

A visit to the Gaza Strip

by Cathy Brubaker Miles

As we parked our rental cars on the Israeli side of the checkpoint, I had a great sense of anticipation about our two-day visit to the Gaza Strip. There were 12 in our delegation of Reconciliation Walk staff and participants. We had been invited to the Gaza Strip by Mr. Falouji, the Minister of Post and Telecom in the Palestinian Authority. Our visit was facilitated by his public relations director, Tagaret.

The contrast between Israel and the Palestinian territory was evident as we crossed the border. The Gaza Strip was crowded and dusty, with poorly paved roads and drab buildings. As we drove through refugee camps, the many young children at play in the narrow streets and vacant lots affected me. Their living conditions were substandard, yet they found joy as their kites soared in the bright blue sky.

Tagaret took us on a tour of the city of Gaza, and we shared the apology with people we met on the streets. We shared the message of apology with Mr. Falouji and listened as he discussed the complexity of the situation in the Gaza Strip. He arranged to meet us for dinner at a restaurant.

As he entered the restaurant that evening, he greeted us, then informed us we would be going to meet with the president.

When we arrived, we were ushered into a reception room, where we introduced ourselves to Yasser Arafat. Our leader, Cathy Nobles, explained the purpose of our visit and gave him a copy of the message in Arabic. Mr. Arafat received the message and thanked us for being people working for peace. He presented Cathy with an elaborately carved Nativity scene commemorating the celebration of Bethlehem 2000. We walked away from our meeting in awe of the opportunity we had to share Jesus' message of peace and forgiveness with this influential leader.

Courtesy photo

A message of peace and forgiveness: Cathy Brubaker Miles greets Palestinian president Yasser Arafat in the Gaza Strip.

Cathy Brubaker Miles, Richmond, Va., served as logistics coordinator for the Reconciliation Walk.

We're ALL in the sam

by Kent Davis Sensenig

Paul's sea sojourn (Acts 27) stands in a long biblical tradition of stories about ships and big storms at sea, stretching back to Noah and his ark. Recall Jonah, who got tossed out of the boat. Even Jesus and his disciples had a few rough yet revelatory episodes on the Sea of Galilee.

In the Bible, the sea symbolizes primordial forces of chaos that threaten God's good order for life. God separated the water from the dry land in the Creation. Later, the parting of the Red Sea before the Hebrew children opened a (dry) path to liberation. And the Psalms speak of Yahweh's voice "roaring over the waters," demarcating the boundaries beyond which the sea cannot cross. Jesus himself calms the storm on the Sea of Galilee with just a word. Salvation from the sea is one of the particular motifs the Bible uses to point to God's broader salvation of the whole world.

Salvation from the sea is one of the particular motifs the Bible uses to point to God's broader salvation of the whole world.

Shipwreck at sea: Paul, under the tight Roman guard of Julius the centurion, was on his way to come before Caesar. Luke, the author of Acts, never forgets this overarching objective of the plot line, but surprising things happen along the way to expand Paul's individual, even sectarian agenda to include the lives and hopes of many outside the church. This detour from "church business" proves revealing of God's vision for the wide world.

Paul establishes a friendly working relationship with Julius, which will prove fortuitous. Their ship encounters rough waters, and Paul prophesies that if they don't turn back they will face disaster. Julius and the ship's captain ignore his warning, however, and set sail again. Suddenly they are swept up by a hurricane and blown before the wind for two torturous weeks. The sailors do everything possible to save the ship, binding ropes around its body to hold it together, lowering the sails to avoid being driven into a sandbar, and tossing cargo and gear overboard to lighten the load. But ultimately they give up hope.

Paul encourages them, speaking of a vision he received from God that all would be saved, though the ship will be destroyed. They near land, but some of the sailors attempt to sneak off in the lifeboats, leaving the rest behind. Paul warns Julius that the fate of all hinges on everyone sticking together. The sailors obey Julius' command to return to the imperiled vessel, and the lifeboats are cut loose. Paul again encourages his shipmates to make one last-ditch effort. He takes bread, breaks it among them, and cajoles them to take heart and eat. With hopes and strength revived they prepare to venture ashore.

But again the unity and safety of all are threatened when the Roman soldiers prepare to execute the prisoners, Paul among them, for fear they will escape in the chaos. This time Julius saves the day, ordering his men to let the prisoners swim for it like all the rest. The ship breaks up, but all reach the nearby island of Malta, where simple villagers welcome, warm and feed them on the beach.

These unsophisticated islanders first mistake Paul for a murderer after he is bitten by a snake—a sure sign of God's curse—then make the further mistake of considering him a god when he is not harmed by the bite. Despite these misunderstandings, Paul goes on to heal the island headman's father and many others who are sick. The headman provides them with generous hospitality for three days and even provisions the whole group for its trip onward to Rome, their original destination.

This story may warn us to be prepared for serious misunderstandings and cross-purposes between Christians and the world. For example, the ship's leaders ignore Paul's prophetic warning. Later, the sailors on one occasion, and the soldiers on another, threaten the safety of all when they seek to save themselves at the expense of the rest. And the superstitious Maltese islanders misinterpret Paul's identity two times in a row as a result of the snake incident. Since we don't share the same stories, the same values or the same God with nonbelieving neighbors, it isn't surprising we may misunderstand or even conflict with each other at times.

Christians and pagans: But there can be friendship, respect, cooperation and hospitality between Christians and the world. In fact, Christians may even find themselves being saved by non-Christians. We see signs of all the above in the friendship between Julius and Paul, especially in that Julius saves Paul's neck in the end. The skillful crisis management of the ship by the sailors also contributes to the saving of all, especially after the crew comes around to listening to Paul the second time. And it is the "unusual kindness," as Luke puts it, and generous hospitality of the "primitive" islanders that rescues everyone after they wash ashore, cold and hungry, on an unknown beach.

This story challenges us as Christians to realize we have something powerful and unique to give the world, while it also calls us to humbly recognize that non-Christians have an important contribution to make as well. On the one hand, Paul provides the ship with both

oat

Lessons from the Acts 27 story of Paul's shipwreck at sea.

a prophetic warning and a vision of encouragement and hope; he offers up intercessory prayer to God on the ship's behalf and provides them with direction in their time of trial. In some mysterious way, Paul blesses the ship by breaking bread among them. Later, on the island, he brings healing to many. (Unlike the rest of Acts, however, Paul does no direct evangelizing that is recorded.)

On the other hand, while God appears to save the ship through Paul, the pagans have a positive role to play as well. In response to Paul's words of hope they band together and work for the good of all: the sailors offering their sailing skills, Julius his decisive authority as a leader, and the simple islanders whatever resources they have to share.

Above all else this story reminds us that we are all on the same boat and all under God's gracious care. Christians are but a small minority on the boat (a handful among 276, as the text carefully notes) and in the world. We are subject to the same sufferings, the same disasters and the same problems as the rest of humanity, and somehow we need to learn how to work together with non-Christians to solve these problems, relieve these sufferings and bring shalom to the world.

We can take courage in knowing that God is committed to saving the whole world. Ever since the postflood days of Noah, God has upheld a covenant of protection toward every living creature. Paul's assurance to the pagan sailors that "not a hair on your heads will be harmed" is an echo of Jesus' affirmation to his disciples that "God knows every hair on the head" of his faithful followers and will surely meet their needs.

But God does not save the ship. Perhaps we will all have to give up some of our secure vessels of wealth, power and technology in order to receive God's saving grace, like the rich merchants in Revelation who must watch weeping from afar while "Babylon" burns. In any case, we can follow Paul's lead by breaking bread and being a healing community in the midst of a storm-tossed world, always praying to God on the world's behalf and calling upon God to bring shalom or salvation in the midst of strife.

In many ways, Paul is the New Testament fulfillment of the Old Testament character Jonah. Both are given a commission to go to the warmongering imperial capital and preach repentance to the pagan Gentiles (Nineveh in the former case, Rome in the latter). Jonah's refusal to go and lack of compassion for "outsiders" brings down danger and judgment upon the motley crew with whom he sails. Paul's faithfulness and empathy lead to the saving of his diverse shipmates. In the end, Jonah saves his shipmates, too, by allowing himself to be cast overboard, and the sailors praise the God of the Hebrews as a result. Jonah is saved, too; it is easier to go with God's flow rather than against it.

God's power over the powers: This Lucan short story may seem like a tall tale from long ago. But it is acutely realistic in its portrayal of how God acts in our lives to save us. It demonstrates how God's divine power makes a difference in a world filled with lesser powers that seem much more potent and tangible.

The powers opposed to God on the ship are ones familiar to us in the 20th century: natural disasters (the hurricane), violence (the Roman soldiers' threat of fatal force), self-interest (the sailors' attempt to sneak off with the lifeboats), despair (the crew's loss of hope), pride (the captain's refusal to listen to Paul's inspired warning), ignorance (the superstition of the islanders), hunger or scarcity (both on the ship and on the island the crew is threatened with deprivation).

Perhaps we will all have to give up some of our secure vessels of wealth, power and technology in order to receive God's saving grace.

God's saving power is projected through a series of simple but profound human actions: friendship (between Paul and Julius, who should be enemies), prayer (Paul opens himself to a divine vision of hope), words (Paul's speech of encouragement), fellowship (breaking bread together), abilities (Julius' leadership, the sailors' skills), hospitality (the sharing of the islanders), healing (on the island) and cooperation (in the end, despite all the differences and divisions). God may still perform supernatural miracles, but it is the daily miracles of creation and human love and friendship that sustain us through the generations, though we often fail to realize this ever-present potential around us.

Our Sabbath-less "new world order" of ecological calamity, gratuitous consumption, scandalous inequity, spiritual vacuity, borderless commerce, community instability, high-tech weaponry, broken families, dysfunctional institutions, fast-paced frivolities and recurrent genocide does indeed resemble a directionless ship driven before the ill-willed winds of the Prince of the Air. But God's Spirit hovers over this storm-wracked world like a mother hen brooding over her chicks. With us or without us, the crucified One is bringing salvation to all—even if through a refining fire. One day "every knee should bend … and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:10-11).

Kent Davis Sensenig lives in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Italian church: great result of little act

Celebration marks 50 years of Mennonite presence

PALERMO, Sicily—It all started after World War II, when Russell Maniaci, an Italian immigrant and member of Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., began sending care packages to needy relatives in Sicily. In a package to an aged aunt, Maniaci included a New Testament. It was read by Franca Ceraulo, who helped the woman with her correspondence and became the first Mennonite in Italy.

Fifty years after that seed was planted, an Oct. 30-Nov. 1 celebration in Palermo commemorated the growth of the Italian Mennonite Church into seven congregations with 250 members and a Sunday worship attendance of more than 425.

Never think what you do is insignificant. . . . You never know what little acts you are involved in will give great results.

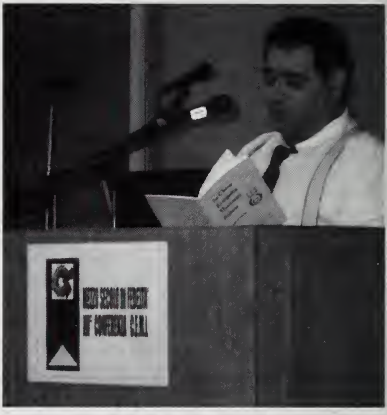
—George R. Brunk III

"Never think what you do is insignificant," said opening speaker George R. Brunk III, the first Mennonite resident missionary to Italy. "Just as the faithfulness of putting a New Testament into a care package resulted in the birth of a new church, you never know what little acts you are involved in will give great results."

Ceraulo was baptized in 1949 by Mennonite Church relief workers Lewis Martin and Jason Weaver. Until 1964, the Mennonite presence in Italy survived through local leadership and Martin's semiannual visits.

Brunk and his wife, Erma, went to Italy in 1964 with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. Now living in Harrisonburg, Va., they were two of 10 former VMBM missionaries to Italy who returned for the celebration. The Italian Mennonite Church invited all former missionaries to attend and paid a third of their airfare.

"The people of God, Israel, are one," Italian Mennonite Church president Francesco Picone said in his welcoming remarks. "But they are divided into 12 tribes. The Christian church is one, too. But it is also divided into tribes. We belong to the Mennonite tribe."


VMBM photo

Francesco Picone, president of the Italian Mennonite Church, makes his welcoming remarks during the 50th anniversary celebration of Mennonites in Italy, held in Palermo, Sicily, Oct. 30-Nov. 1.

Willard Eberly, another former missionary and now VMBM Mediterranean regional director, encouraged the Italians to reach out to neighboring Albania. "Jesus was the perfect example of the faithful servant," he told the gathering. "He completely obeyed the demands of his father. And now Jesus makes his own demands on us. His last commandment [the Great Commission] is our first duty."

More than 350 people attended each session of the conference, and six young men were baptized on Sunday morning.—*VMBM News Service*

EgyptAir crash takes life of Kansas church member

Among those waiting for findings into the crash of EgyptAir 990 are relatives of Lois Neufeld. A member of Hanston (Kan.) Mennonite Church, Neufeld, 69, was on her way to visit the Holy Land when the Boeing 767 plunged into the sea off Nantucket Island on Oct. 31, reported the Newton *Kansan*.

Neufeld, a retired nurse, lived in the Kansas City suburb of Overland Park, Kan., but kept her membership in her home congregation, located in western Kansas. She was a 1953 graduate of Bethel College, North Newton.

A memorial service will be held at Hanston Mennonite Church in late January. Neufeld is survived by a sister, two nieces, three great-nieces and one great-nephew.

The investigation continues into the cause of the mysterious crash that killed 217 people.

Modern England's first Mennonite dies at age 89, introduced to church through World War II relief

LONDON—Eileen Pells Coffman picked a difficult time to become a Christian and a pacifist. It was the early stages of World War II, and in addition to suffering through Nazi Germany's regular bombings of her home city of London, Coffman had to endure conflict at home over her decision.

But her beliefs led her to become the first 20th-century English Mennonite, a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker and a long-time presence in the development of a Mennonite witness in England.

Coffman died Nov. 6 in London following a brief illness. She was 89, the oldest member of London's Wood Green Mennonite Church, the only Mennonite congregation in England. Funeral services were held Nov. 15.

"She had an indomitable spirit, having survived the bombing of London in World War II and having been through periods of very difficult inner-city church work, ... yet came through it all with her quick humor and deep faith and ... zest for life," says J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and an MBM worker in London from 1991 to 1996.

Coffman's introduction to the church came as the result of a Nazi air raid in 1940. While in an underground shelter, she was invited to join a worship service in one of the rooms and became a regular participant. There she met John E. Coffman, one of the first Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) relief workers in London. They were married in 1943.

"I debated a lot of issues with him, including questions about the war," she told Kraybill in his 1999 book, *On the Pilgrims' Way.* "I thought we should fight back. But gradually I came to see that fighting was not Jesus' way of dealing with enemies."

Coffman's emerging pacifist beliefs were initially met with resistance from her family. Her brother was in the Navy (and was later killed), her sister worked in an aircraft factory, and her mother came from a military family. When Coffman returned home the night she was baptized, she found herself locked out.

Relations with her family were eventually restored.

Upon her conversion, she joined her husband in MCC's relief efforts in London until the end of their assignment in 1946. The Coffmans settled permanently in London after the war and were part of a fellowship of other Mennonites in the city which met periodically. The group on Sept. 30, 1952, conducted what has been called the first Mennonite Communion service in London.

The fellowship was a precursor to Wood Green and was also associated with MBM's 1953 opening of the London Mennonite Centre, a scholarly ministry.

The Coffmans joined MBM in 1954 and led Free Gospel Hall, a London congregation in an urban, working-class neighborhood. John was the pastor, assisted by Eileen. They retired in 1967 and eventually moved to the London Mennonite Centre. John died in 1990.

Eileen Pells Coffman with her husband, John, circa 1944.

Coffman remained active in the church and in the London Mennonite Centre. In July she went to the MBM European Colloquium in England, attended by representatives from nine countries.

"She loved the Mennonite church and always had a keen interest in the international Mennonite scene," Kraybill says.

In a 1957 report to North American Mennonites, Coffman wrote: "I hope I do not make you feel puffed up, but becoming a Mennonite has meant much to me, even though I cannot claim any ancestral line. I tell these people [in London] that what I have found to be grand about you is your simple worship and Christian fellowship most of all, and the lack of hearing gossip among the members and the willingness to help others."—*Rich Preheim with MBM News Service*

Early Anabaptism had violent English chapter

While Eileen Pells Coffman was the first contemporary Mennonite in England, Anabaptism first appeared on the island just 10 years after Felix Manz baptized George Blaurock in Zurich in 1525. According to the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, the first Anabaptists came to England from the Netherlands in 1535. But as elsewhere in Europe, they were severely persecuted, and there are a number of accounts of martyrs. One congregation was established in Norwich in 1580 but fled to the Netherlands the following year. While no church developed in England, sympathizers were drawn to other groups, particularly the Quakers.

Bethel group joins Iraqis at sparse table

A group at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., spent the week before Thanksgiving on a rationed diet in an act of solidarity with Iraqis who have no imminent hopes for a feast.

The Bethel Peace Club declared Nov. 15-19 as "Rationed Diet Week: Joining Our Iraqi Sisters and Brothers at the Table." The group ate only the quantity of foods available to Iraqis under the terms of the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program. A one-week ration for one adult includes five pounds of wheat flour, one pound of rice, one pound of sugar, two ounces of lentils or beans, eight ounces of cooking oil, half an ounce of cheese, one ounce of tea and one ounce of salt.

"I was on this diet for one week during the summer," says organizer Elisabeth Harder, a senior from Mountain Lake, Minn. "And it's a good reminder that we need to keep working as advocates for the Iraqi citizens and others who are hungry."

MEDA launches new investment fund

NORFOLK, Va.—Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) has gone back to the future for its new ethical investment fund.

The new venture, announced at MEDA's Nov. 4-7 convention in Norfolk, will be called the Sarona Global Investment Fund, a name taken from the Sarona dairy in Paraguay, which in 1954 became the first enterprise to receive a loan from MEDA.

"The new name is a way we can honor our history as we look to the future," said fund president Gerhard Pries.

The Sarona fund builds on the MEDA Global Investment Fund, started in the 1970s to lend money to low-income people. MEDA has now received permission from securities commissions in the United States to offer to the general public investments in the form of term deposits and limited equity partnerships. Arrangements with Canadian securities commissions are expected to be completed by January 2000.

Mennonite refugees to Paraguay adopted the name Sarona for their dairy, taking it from the German word "Saron" or "Sharon" in English. It is the name of a plain in Palestine, celebrated in the Old Testament for its beauty and fertility.

MEDA Paraguay has made the first investment in the new fund, presenting a check for $1,000 during the convention. MEDA Paraguay director Rudolf Duerksen expressed the hope that Sarona will benefit others as the first MEDA loan benefitted the Paraguayans.

"The impact and success of the Sarona Dairy in Paraguay cannot be underestimated," Duerksen said. The dairy is now owned and operated by a private businessman.

Sarona has $3.5 million, with the majority of the money coming from MEDA. One of the largest contributors so far has been Mennonite Mutual Aid, which has put in $500,000. Pries said the goal is to have $10 million by 2003.

Also during the convention, MEDA announced that:

- for the first time in its history, the organization had received more than $1 million in donations;
- five hundred people received business training and 294 jobs were created through ASSETS, the MEDA-supported program for low-income people in North America;
- MEDA signed contracts worth $7.5 million to provide assistance to people in the developing world;
- MEDA opened an office in Peru.

Featured speakers were ABC News religion reporter Peggy Wehmeyer and John Dalla Costa, president of the Center for Ethical Orientation.—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

> **The new name is a way we can honor our history as we look to the future.**
>
> —*Gerhard Pries*

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Publishing merger put on fast track

The Commission on Education (COE) and Mennonite Publishing Board (MPB) have set Feb. 1, 2001, as the deadline to transform the two current publishing operations into one.

COE and MPB last month signed a joint operating agreement, moving toward the creation of a new publishing entity out of Faith & Life Press and Mennonite Publishing House. The agreement calls for interim steps such as a new marketing division to serve both publishers. A task force of six members—two from COE, two from MPB and one at-large member each from the United States and Canada—will be created to work on publishing transformation.

"Publishing is unique because it's intended to be binational while other programs are being developed to be country-specific with partnering capability," says Dennis Good, COE executive secretary.

COE has also signed a joint operating agreement with Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries that will place COE's education staff under the supervision of MBCM president Everett Thomas. Staff members are Abe Bergen, director of youth ministry; Ken Hawkley, director of adult and young adult education; and Eleanor Snyder, director of children's education.

"Education-area staff will still be accountable to COE, but it will be through Everett," Good says. "It's a way of fostering a closer working relationship, … not prescriptive of what [the new structure] will be like."

COE, MBCM and MPB have also reacted favorably to a proposal to establish a Congregational Ministries Board for Mennonite Church USA. The proposal will be brought to the January meeting of the Mennonite Church USA Transformation Team.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service with Rich Preheim*

Integration concerns leads to MBM staff policy

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Board of Missions has become the first agency to adopt a policy for severance compensation and staff retention in the face of anticipated structural changes due to the creation of the new Mennonite Church. The policy was approved by MBM board members meeting in Winnipeg last month.

The severance package—health care, career counseling, job-search assistance and four to six months' salary—is for current MBM employees who are not offered positions in the new mission structure or turn down positions if they are less time, lower salary or require relocation. Employees that remain with the new mission structure will receive a "stay bonus," based on years of experience.
—Rich Preheim with MBM News Service

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by the way ...

By the turn of the 20th century, industrial wealth, which accounted for 50 to 75 percent of total Mennonite assets in Russia, was in the hands of 2.8 percent of the people.—*An Introduction to Mennonite History*

AMBS faculty member named acting dean

ELKHART, Ind.—Jacob W. Elias, professor of New Testament and former administrator at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, has been named acting dean while Willard M. Swartley continues to recover from an Oct. 29 heart attack.

Elias joined the AMBS faculty in 1978 and served as dean from 1981 to 1990. He also was acting vice president from 1996 to 1998.

Prior to Swartley's heart attack, the seminary had already started a search for a new dean to succeed Swartley, who had planned to step down no later than the summer of 2001.

Chinese delegation gets look at U.S. Christianity

PHILADELPHIA—In a visit arranged by China Educational Exchange (CEE), five Chinese, including two Christians, spent Oct. 7 to Nov. 7 observing Christianity in the United States.

The delegation included two faculty members from Sichuan Theological Seminary. The other delegation members were government officials from the Sichuan Religious Affairs Bureau, responsible for overseeing and assisting religion in the country.

"We included Religious Affairs Bureau officials in the delegation because they rarely have a chance to travel," says CEE director Myrrl Byler. "We trust that ... they will see the importance of faith and Christianity in America and understand some concerns that American Christians have about the church in China."

The delegation visited New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Virginia, Indiana and Californa.—*MCC News Service*

Two colleges honored for character development

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va., were included in the most recent edition of *The Templeton Guide: Colleges That Encourage Development.*

The guide, compiled by the Templeton Foundation of Radnor, Pa., noted Bethel's "Basic Issues of Faith and Life" course, required for all seniors. Also recognized were EMU's First Year Experience program for freshmen, cross-cultural curriculum and civic education.

Vietnam flood-assistance work gets MCC funds

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee has given $20,000 to aid people in central Vietnam, where flooding has killed at least 530 people. Plans are still being developed, but some MCC funds will probably be used to purchase food; the rest will go for longer-term reconstruction. MCC also plans to collaborate with Mennonites in Ho Chi Minh City on some relief efforts.—*MCC News Service*

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Workers

Barge, Elaine Zook, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee as MCC East Coast associate for peace education and connecting peoples coordinator.

Bauman, Dale, Elmira, Ont., has been named a consultant in evangelism and church development for Mennonite Board of Missions.

Douple, Elizabeth, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MCC in Ephrata as a Ten Thousand Villages store sales associate.

Dunkelberger, Julie and Kelly, Wichita, Kan., are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Guatemala as education coordinators.

Eby, Cindy and Randy Mast, Denver, are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Kenya as sustainable wood-carving resourcers.

Frey, Starla, Phoenix, is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as a child-care provider.

Forry, Maria and Tim, Lititz, Pa., are beginning two-year assignments with MCC in Harlan, Ky. She will be a social and community development worker, and he will be a carpenter and mechanic.

Hinojosa, Felipe, Brownsville, Texas, is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in south Texas as a southern tier staff associate.

Leaman, Philip B., has been named president of the Association of Anabaptist Risk Management.

Lender, Shirley, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as an administrative assistant for Ten Thousand Villages.

Martin, Brian, Waynesboro, Va., has been named director of the Eastern Mennonite Missions Baltimore Discipleship Center.

Nafziger, Lois, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Goshen as a peace and justice educator.

Paulovich, Cheryl, has been named prayer ministry coordinator for Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

Plenert, Janet, Ceilandia, Brazil, has been named Latin America program administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and MBM.

Rempel, Erwin, Newton, Kan., has been named director of development and church relations for COM.

Sensenig, Jewel and Neal, Leola, Pa., have been named directors of the Eastern Mennonite Missions Harrisburg (Pa.) Discipleship Center.

Wiebe, Joan and Leonard, North Newton, Kan., have been named staff members of the General Conference Mennonite Church development office.

Williams, Sheri, Tampa, Fla., has been named director of Service Adventure, a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries and MBM.

Yoder, John D., has been named director of New Century of Missions campaign for MBM.

Yoder, Ronald E., has been named president/CEO of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg, Va.

Births

Alford, Traevon-Dier, Oct. 8, to Karla (Nussbaum) and William Alford III, Rittman, Ohio.

Amstutz, Megan Marie, Oct. 10, to Kay (Ford) and Mike Amstutz, Orrville, Ohio.

Bomberger, Micah Ray, Oct. 25, to Kathy (Hurst) and Rob Bomberger, Lititz, Pa.

Esch, Sydney Jane, Sept. 11, to Elaine (Lapp) and Eric Esch, Philadelphia.

Krahn, Stuart Haines, Oct. 26, to Brian and Stacy (Haines) Krahn, Elkhart, Ind.

Paul, Bryan Christopher, Oct. 18, to Chris and Suzanne (Bryant) Paul, Denver.

Peters, Chase Ryan, Oct. 19, to Deb and Scott Peters, Steinbach, Man.

Petkau, Dale Abram Bradley, Oct. 7, to Lori and Ray Petkau, Steinbach, Man.

Roth, Aidan Christopher, Oct. 27, to Chris and Monica (Yoder) Roth, Goshen, Ind.

Stoltzfus, Andrew Grant, Oct. 17, to Rose (Shenk) and Reuben Stoltzfus, Iowa City, Iowa.

Tucker, Kyle Ross, Sept. 18, to John and Kris (Gingerich) Tucker, London, Ont.

Witmer, Molly Hannah, Oct. 16, to Kelly and Wayne Witmer, Columbiana, Ohio.

Marriages

Bemiller/Ramer: Lucas Bemiller, Wakarusa, Ind., and Natasha Ramer, Goshen, Ind., Oct. 23 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Buchen/Hurst: Ranita Buchen, Lancaster, Pa., and Brian Hurst, Lancaster, Oct. 16 at Groffdale Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Hardy/Summers: Jonathan Hardy, Elkhart, Ind. and Rachel Summers, Fishers, Ind., Oct. 16 at Woodland Springs Christian Church, Fishers.

Hochstedler/Wenger: Mark Hochstedler, Harrisonburg, Va., and Wendy Wenger, Waynesboro, Va., Oct. 16 at Highland Retreat, Bergton, Va.

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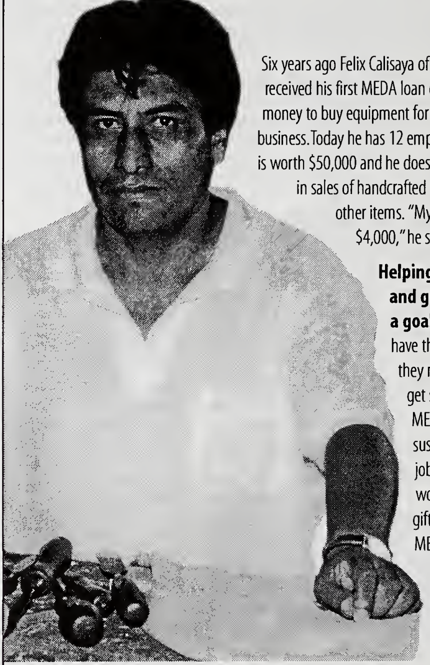
Kehler/Taggart: Ron Kehler, Steinbach, Man., and Denise Taggart, Steinbach, Oct. 19 at Jamaica.
Martin/Teeter: Lisa Martin, Ronks, Pa., and John Teeter, Willow Street, Pa., Oct. 16 at Charlotte Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.
McLaughlin/Richard: Sandra McLaughlin, East Petersburg, Pa., and Phillip Richard, East Petersburg, Oct. 23 at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Stayrook/Wiens: Miller Stayrook, Newton, Kan., and Vernabelle Siemens Wiens, Oct. 30 at Seekers Church of the Church of the Savior, Washington.
Steffy/Swartz: Nelson Steffy, Carlisle, Pa., and Joy Swartz, Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 16 at Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Berkey, Lucille Hess, 91, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 30. Spouse: Arthur Berkey (deceased). Parents: Leonard and Florence Elliott Hess (deceased). Survivors: children Esther Cender, Norma Miller, Weldon; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at East Goshen Mennonite Church.
Burkholder, Virginia Troyer, 79, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 4. Spouse: Warren Burkholder. Parents: Herbert and Sadie Mast Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Judith Espinoza, Linda Scrogham, Sue, Donald, Philip, Sheldon, Stephen, Frederick, Randall; 18 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: Nov. 6 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.
Cashman, Mina, 86, Altoona, Pa., died Sept. 24. Spouse: George Cashman (deceased). Survivors: children Mahlon, Samuel; five grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Miller Run Chapel, Altoona.
Helmuth, Dora, 87, Sarasota, Fla., died Oct. 17. Spouse: Erwin Helmuth (deceased). Parents: Eli and Jemima Schlabach (deceased). Survivors: children Nancy Benjamin, Susanne Blackman, Timothy; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 21 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.
Hockman, Harvey, 80, Chalfont, Pa., died Oct. 24 of diabetes mellitus. Spouse: Susan Weller Hockman (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Ella Strouse Hockman (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Halteman, Pauline Liechty; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Hoffman, Roger, 77, Bluffton, Ohio, died Oct. 31 of heart problems. Spouse: Dorothy Tronheiser Hoffman. Other survivors: son Roger; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 5 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.
Hurst, Mary Witmer, 93, Lititz, Pa., died Oct. 18. Spouse: Levi Martin Hurst. Parents: Daniel and Barbara Witmer (deceased). Survivors: children Jewel Long, David; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 20 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.
Powell, John, 87, South English, Iowa, died Oct. 21. Spouse: Gertrude Kauffman Powell. Parents: Lewis and Ida Hertzler Powell (deceased). Other survivors: children Kathleen Troyer, Daniel; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 24 at Wellman (Iowa) Mennonite Church.
Roth, Irene, 84, Morton, Ill., died Oct. 9. Parents: Edwin and Fannie Imhoff Roth (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 13 at Morton.
Smith, Norman, 63, Ailsa Craig, Ont., died Oct. 14 of cancer. Spouse: Ruth Nighswander. Parents: John (deceased) and Hannah Smith. Other survivors: children Stuart, Wilma Kirmse, Beth Reiber, Loralyn; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig.
Stauffer, Emma Snyder, 102, Manheim, Pa., died Oct. 28. Spouse: Henry Stauffer (deceased). Parents: Levi and Sue Bender Snyder (deceased). Survivors: children Clarence, Howard, Helen Keiper; 13 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 30 at Pleasant View Retirement Community Chapel, Manheim.
Wiebe, Marge, 64, Winnipeg, died Oct. 27. Spouse: Bernie Wiebe. Parents: Cornelius and Annie Letkeman (deceased). Other survivors: children Gayle Oudel, Greg, Grant; three grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 30 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.
Woodapple, Evetta Neville-Barnett, 85, Pekin, Ill., died Oct. 10. Spouse: Orville Woodapple (deceased). Parents: James and Carrie Nolder Neville-Barnett (deceased). Survivors: son James Bolen; four grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 13 at Pekin.

Announcements of Workers, Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within two months after the event. Events are listed within two months before the event.



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classifieds

- **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp** seeks ***volunteers*** for lodge addition inside finish work. Especially needed from now until March 2000. Contact camp director Allan Bartel, 719-687-9506.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director*** with some worship planning responsibilities. Send resumes by Dec. 3, 1999, to Maplewood Mennonite Church, attn. Judy Stauffer, 4129 Maplecrest Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Mennonite Press Inc.** seeks ***commissioned sales position***: General commercial printer looking for a motivated individual who is familiar with print production to develop new accounts focusing on the Christian publishing and nonprofit markets. Must be able to travel up to one week per month.

  Contact Steven Rudiger at Mennonite Press Inc., 316-283-4680.

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities in Lancaster County, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time adviser positions available in group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466. EOE

- **Bethel College** seeks an ***associate director of development***. Responsibilities include identification and cultivation of donor prospects, and leadership in the college's annual fund, capital fund and planned giving programs. Qualifications: interpersonal, public presentation and organizational skills; self-direction; familiarity with Bethel constituency; strong advocacy for Bethel College; commitment to beliefs and values of the Mennonite faith; experience in or closely related to development or advancement fields.

  Submit resume and cover letter to Sondra Koontz, director of advancement, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th, North Newton, KS 67117; email skoontz@bethelks.edu

- **Camp Friedenswald** seeks an ***executive director***, beginning on or before spring 2000. The executive director is responsible for oversight of year-round program and staff, management of $.75 million budget, camp promotion and fund raising. Candidate should have prior management experience, marketing and fund-raising knowledge, and a willingness to embrace the camp's long-term strategic plan. Compensation includes salary, housing and utilities, and comprehensive medical insurance.

  Interested parties should submit a resume and reference list to the camp board chairperson: Lori Nester, 103 N. Lawn Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817; email nesterl@bluffton.edu. Deadline to apply is Dec. 15, 1999.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, Harrisonburg, Va., has a second-semester opening for a permanent teaching position in ***family and consumer science***. For more information contact Shirley J. Yoder at 540-432-4502.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** has an opening in ***biochemistry***, Ph.D. required. Specialization: biochemistry; competency: chemistry and genetics. Full-time ongoing faculty position beginning fall 2000. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, interim VP and academic dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin Dec. 15, 1999. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Immediate opening** for ***conference minister of youth/young adults***: Indiana-Michigan Conference (MC) and the eastern half of Central District Conference (GC) are seeking a full-time conference minister of youth and young adults. The person filling this position will serve as congregational consultant and resource coordinator to congregational leaders in ministry with junior high, high school and young adults. This person will be a member of the conferences' ministry teams. Pastoral training and experience are preferred. All interested inquiries are to be received by Jan. 15, 2000. An information packet concerning this position is available upon request.

  Please send a completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (MLI available from any conference office) to: John Hockman, search committee chairperson, P.O. Box 156, Topeka, IN 46571; 219-593-2389; fax 219-593-2150; email hockman@topekanet.com

- **Goshen College** seeks an individual to direct a ***K-12 preparatory music program***. This is a half-time, administrative faculty position beginning January or February 2000. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. Administrative experience required. Training and experience in teaching strings and/or piano preferred. Review of applications will begin by Nov. 24, 1999. The position will remain open until filled. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

  Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of professional reference to Paul A. Keim, academic dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings."

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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- **The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta** seeks a full-time ***director for Camp Valaqua*** near Calgary, starting in February 2000. Responsibilities include supervision and direction of camp programs that nurture the spiritual and emotional understanding and well-being of campers. The director recruits, trains and supervises summer staff and volunteers and supports their spiritual growth and leadership skill development. The director is responsible for building and maintaining strong camp support in congregations and implementing creative promotional events. Applicants must have a demonstrated Christian faith and a passion for camp ministry. Previous experience in camp leadership, effective communication skills and organizational and administrative strength are essential. Camp Valaqua is designed to serve 600 campers each summer with 40 staff in a beautiful setting in the foothills of the Rockies.

  Please submit a letter of application with resume and three letters of reference by Dec. 22, 1999, to Harry Pauls, camp committee chairperson, 253-52258 Range Road 231, Sherwood Park, AB T8B 1M7; 780-464-4175; email hpauls@dow.com

- **$25 million retailer** located in northeastern Ohio Mennonite community seeks a ***human resource director***. Experience and college degree required (master's degree preferred). Responsibilities include administration of the following: Benefit programs: flexible benefits plan, Simplified Employee Pension (SEP), hospitalization program; Personnel records: maintain employment records, uniform program, performance evaluations, maintain and develop policies and procedures, employee recognition and communication; Safety: worker's compensation, safety training; Training: certifications, internal and external training; Staffing: recruitment, hiring orientation and affirmative action, ADA, EEOC compliance. Salary range negotiable. Free hospitalization, generous retirement package and great nonsmoking environment. AAEO employer.

  Send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to Len Geiser, Len Geiser & Associates, 610 Revere Drive, Goshen, IN 46526; email lenrg@goshen.edu

- **Messiah College**, Grantham, Pa., 17027, has the following full-time, term-tenure-track faculty positions available for 2000-2001; teaching experience preferred:

  Computer science (two positions): Ph.D. in computer science or related cognate. Contact Barry DeRoos, chair, Mathematical Sciences.

  Theatre: master's required; M.F.A. preferred. Contact Theodore Prescott, chair, Visual and Theatrical Arts.

  Graphic arts: M.F.A. or equivalent required with teaching and professional experience preferred. Contact Theodore Prescott, chair, Visual and Theatrical Arts.

  Marketing: Ph.D. (or ABD). Potential for oversight of department and/or Center for Leadership Development. Contact Terry Earhart, chair, Management and Business.

  Human resource management/organizational behavior: Doctorate (or ABD). Potential for oversight of department and/or Center for Leadership Development. Contact Terry Earhart, chair, Management and Business.

  Philosophy: Ph.D. Contact Terry Brensinger, chair, Biblical Studies, Religion and Philosophy.

  Sociology: Ph.D. in sociology. Contact Raeann Hamon, chair, Behavioral Sciences.

  Engineering: Ph.D. Contact David Vader, chair, Engineering.

  Education (curriculum/instruction with specialty in special education): Doctorate. Contact Velma Yoder, chair, Education.

  Submit a letter of interest, vita, and the names, titles and phone numbers of three professional references to the respective chair. Application deadline: Dec. 10, 1999.

  Messiah College is a Christian college of the liberal and applied arts and sciences. The college is committed to an embracing evangelical spirit rooted in the Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan traditions of the Christian church. Messiah College is a teaching institution that emphasizes instruction but values research and public service. Strong support is given to faculty growth and scholarship.

  For additional information, contact Kim S. Phipps, academic dean, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027; 717-766-2511; www:messiah.edu. AA/EOE

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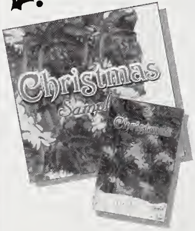

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by Rich Preheim

The game of the name

For all the discussion over the name of the new Mennonite Church, one issue we didn't have to wrestle with was gender inclusiveness. That is unlike our brethren—and sisters—in the Church of the Brethren.

Because some members believe their denomination's name indicates a male-dominated church, *Messenger,* the Church of the Brethren magazine, has resurrected debate on changing the name. Among suggestions, serious and not-so-serious, for a new name are Covenant Peace Church, Servant Church, Church of the Beatitudes and Church of the Closely-Related People.

Some writers to *Messenger* drew on history for their suggestions, such as the Alexanderites, named after the denomination's founder, Alexander Mack. Someone else proposed a return to Dunkers, an earlier moniker given the church.

Then there were those members who are happy with the current name. If the problem is that it is archaic and old fashioned, then embrace it, says Frank Ramirez, pastor from Elkhart, Ind.

"We're out of step. Deliberately," he writes. "We're not with it, relevant, groovy, heavy, boss or phat, for that matter. We're throwbacks to an era of faithfulness and action, an Anabaptist communion tainted with the pietist concern for authenticity."

Driven to salvation

There's an old line about people not wanting to be pulled over for a traffic violation because they don't want to have to show anyone the photos of themselves on their driver's licenses. But for George Bothwell, pictures on driver's licenses are no joke. In fact, the Owen Sound, Ont., man believes they are a tool of the devil.

"I am convinced that God will not allow those who have allowed themselves to be seduced or deceived into this particular worldly identification system to either become or remain his followers," Bothwell tells *ChristianWeek.*

He says Revelation's references to the "mark of the beast" show that some sort of identification on an individual's body will be a key in identifying those who belong to the antichrist.

Since refusing to have his photo taken for his driver's license two years ago, Bothwell has set off a chain reaction. Although he has been able to drive with temporary licenses, his bank has refused to cash his checks because of "concern for the validity of identification." And his insurance company has slapped an "unlicensed and unrenewable" tag on him.

Bothwell, who is not a member of any church, is now pursuing legal action.

Pull up a chair and dismay awhile

You may want to sit down for this one. From *The Times* of London via *The Joyful Noiseletter* comes the news that Westminster Abbey has sanctioned the sale of 800 chairs used at the funeral of Princess Diana.

The going price per chair is 3,000 pounds, or about $4,800. Each chair comes with a certificate of authenticity signed by the Westminster Abbey dean. As they are sold, the chairs are being replaced with cheap, stackable seats.

Friends of the princess are reportedly appalled by the chair sales.

Y2K watch: time travel

In reference to the birth of Christ, Israel, during this millennial season, is billing itself "The Land Where Time Began." And given the magnitude of its tourism promotions for next year, it doesn't expect time to end once the calendar flips to January 2000.

In a newsletter called *Israelennium News,* a guide to "the Official Destination of the Millennium," the Israel Ministry of Tourism proclaims that "Yes, There Will Be Room at the Inn" because new hotels are being built at a rapid rate in anticipation of increased visitors over the next 14 months. To get there, tourists will want to take El Al Airlines, which has inflight, onboard currency exchange and has been designated by the Vatican as the official airline to the Holy Land for 2000. Speaking of the papacy and traveling, Pope John Paul II is expected to make a March visit to Israel.

Israelennium News highlights plans for Christian pageants, tours of historic sites, a "Motorcycle Peace Journey" from Rome to Bethlehem and a Pat Boone concert. The newsletter also promotes Israel as the ideal location for a bar mitzvah and notes the opening of the first Howard Johnson restaurant in the country.

Tidbits

- Eighty-five percent of people who accept Christ do so before the age of 18. —*Cornerstone*
- Andy Warhol attended Mass several times a week and worked at a Catholic soup kitchen on major holidays.—*Sojourners*
- Only 8 percent of teenagers who attend religious services at least four times a month smoke cigarettes, compared with 22 percent of teens who attend less than once a month.—*The Lutheran*
- Ninety percent of executives at 154 of the largest U.S. charities are white. —*The Chronicle of Philanthropy*
- Church Women United has honored Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., and Rep. Constance Morella, R.-Md., for addressing violence against women and children.

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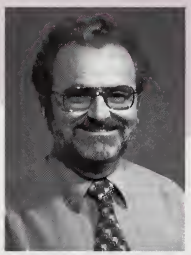

J. Lorne Peachey

Keep your fork

From an anonymous source on the Internet comes the story of a woman who, diagnosed with a terminal illness, called on her pastor to plan her funeral. She had some ideas about what she hoped would happen, but she was insistent about one thing: "I want to be buried with a fork in my hand."

Her incredulous pastor demanded an explanation. "Oh, it's quite simple," the woman said. "In all my years of attending church socials and potlucks, I always remember that, when they clear the dishes, someone will say, 'Keep your fork.' It's my favorite part, because I know something better is coming. So I want people to see me there in that coffin with a fork in my hand and know: 'Her best is still to come.' "

I find this woman's wish a helpful Thanksgiving reminder. This is a time when I think through my past year, remembering those things for which I especially want to thank God. Mixed in, of course, are realizations of what I wish were different, what I'm sorry for, what I want to change.

Rather than tie myself into knots over what might have been or become complacent with what is, this Thanksgiving I remind myself that all this is temporary. For the Christian, much better things are ahead. When he tried to explain it to his disciples in John 14, Jesus put it in terms of many mansions . I think of it as something even better than a bicycle ride that is downhill all the way with the wind at my back.

This Thanksgiving I thank God for what I have in my life, both the good and the not so good. I can do that because, thank God, the best is yet to come.

Happy Thanksgiving. And keep your fork.—*jlp*

This Thanksgiving I thank God for what is in my life, both the good and the not so good. I can do that because, thank God, the best is yet to come.

Uncle Ivan in my back yard

Scottdale, Pa., the home of one of this publication's four offices, the one I work out of, is in an uproar these days. It started when Wal-Mart opened a 24-hour super store in our community, complete with five new stop lights and lots more traffic. But what really has us going is Uncle Ivan. Seeing the potential to make a fast buck, he put up a sign close to the entrance to Wal-Mart announcing his intention to open "Uncle Ivan's Adult Playhouse."

Never in 35 years of living in this community have I seen it galvanized into action so fast. Within a week citizens packed out the United Methodist Church in protest. Ivan also came. A shouting match erupted: free speech vs. community standards, the right to do business as one pleased against "Not in my back yard."

I certainly don't want Uncle Ivan and his playhouse in my back yard. I don't want to drive past this every time I go to the hospital or to the bike shop. I don't want my children to have to do so either. Sexual exploitation and pornography are evils which I don't want to have around. Especially not in my back yard.

But then I remember that, on one of my bike routes, I pass a similar establishment. That's also true most times I drive to the airport. But those are 10 and 30 miles away respectively, both in communities less vigilant and presumably less well-organized.

So if I would protest evil, must I not protest it there also? It's fairly easy to join in prayer and action against things like adult bookstores or gambling casinos when they land in one's lap. But if I would truly love my neighbor, if I would look out for the welfare of my community, which more and more includes those who live in all communities around the world, I must commit myself to be just as prayerfully vigilant for their welfare, especially when they need help in their battle against evil.

"Keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour," the Scriptures remind us (1 Peter 5:8). Not in my back yard. Not in anyone's back yard.—*jlp*

No issue next week: The next regularly scheduled issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Dec. 7.

the Mennonite

December 7, 1999

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Proclaiming innocence

The article "Join Me on God's Death Row" (Nov. 2) presents a myopic and misguided view of death row in America. The author/prisoner terms being on death row a "blessing." No doubt it is for him. Some people put themselves on death row; others are put there, although they are as innocent of a capital crime as Jesus Christ. There is a big difference. Innocence was relevant to Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:7, John 18:23), and it is supremely relevant to God, who sent his son specifically as an innocent prisoner (Isaiah 53:8). As all four Gospel authors go to great pains to show, when innocence becomes irrelevant to a people, they choose Barabbas over Jesus Christ. They have lost their moral compass.

Although I am opposed to the death penalty, innocence is always the most relevant factor of all. The prisoner/author has lost sight of the difference between right and wrong: It is wrong to punish innocent prisoners, and extreme, cruel or unusual punishments are always wrong. Two wrongs never make a right. Sadly, the article reads like part of a life insurance salesman's spiel and a paean to the death penalty. It does a disserve to all innocent prisoners and serious opponents of the death penalty, particularly as it is practiced in the United States only against the poor.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

Lack of sensitivity

I am troubled by "Breaking Bondage, Lifting Oppression" (Nov. 16) about Eastern Mennonite Missions' Youth Evangelism Service team members in Thailand praying at a Buddhist temple. Foreign missionaries drawing attention to themselves by their public actions at a temple hardly depicts sensitivity to another culture and its religious traditions. Furthermore, to characterize Buddhist worship in completely negative terms as "offered to evil spirits and false gods" is a serious misrepresentation of it.

The apostle Paul had a very different attitude toward the religious traditions of the people of Athens when he spoke to them at the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-34). As a Jewish follower of Jesus, Paul was distressed by what he understood as their worship of idols. He nevertheless recognized the people's genuine devotion to God in their worship and used this as an opportunity to converse with them about what he knew of God in Jesus Christ.

During my eight years of mission service with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Asia, I always sought to be respectful of other religions and their holy places. About 10 years ago, an Indonesian Mennonite church leader and I traveled to Thailand to explore the possibilities of beginning a joint mission initiative there. What eventually evolved out of that initial interest is the present program involving an American mission team. I was always disappointed that we were not able to put together a joint team as we had hoped, including Asian and American missionaries. I am even more disappointed to read the kind of report that appeared in *The Mennonite.* This is not what we envisioned.—*Earl Zimmerman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Boundaries and centralities

One of the special satisfactions of being a Mennonite is belonging to a community of shared conviction. Discipleship in a Mennonite perspective is a corporate enterprise where integrity and a quality of behavior are central. Sometimes and in some places, as among some 17th-century New England Puritans, the pursuit of a high standard of discipleship becomes obsessive. The policing function of church leaders then outweighs the appreciation of difference and the possibility of new truth the Holy Spirit may have for us.

Mennonite congregations and conferences have also sometimes focused more on boundaries than on the central theme. Recently I visited with a retired Lancaster County (Pa.) physician whose family was caught in such a mentality more than 50 years ago. Now a Lutheran with numerous Mennonite relatives, he is still wistful about what his family lost in being forced out of the Mennonite church over criteria no longer considered central to our faith and life.

The critical issue is how to maintain a corporate discipleship yet welcome a continuing search for authentic discipleship. Sometimes we are tempted to limit debate and silence dissenting voices. Sixty years ago, Lancaster Conference maintained a list of approved speakers from other Mennonite conferences. Fortunately that list has disappeared. Now I understand that other conferences are preventing some longtime pastors from serving in the pulpit because they have expressed an opinion favoring another position regarding individuals with homosexual orientations. Mennonite Church General Assembly delegates are being deselected because of their advocacy of or rela-

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readers say

tion to a person with such an orientation.

Such actions are regrettable. They seem to suggest a new litmus test to determine orthodoxy or credibility. Should we not appreciate the significant contribution of leaders even though on this one issue, whether by conviction or association, they dare to think different thoughts? Can there really be church without discussion? Is there genuine faithfulness if the Holy Spirit is not seen as enlivening the entire body? Do we not harm the church more by silencing alternative points of view than by nurturing exploration in the Spirit? Come Holy Spirit, come.—*John A. Lapp, Akron, Pa.*

Doing more for children

In Rich Preheim's comment on the ramifications of the child-dedication liturgy from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, he decries the U.S. Senate's failure to pass the Comprehesive Test Ban Treaty, favored by President Clinton, a treaty that might make the world a safer place for Baby 6B (Editorial, Nov. 16). Preheim failed to mention that the U.S. Congress has sent a bill to the President that would stop the gruesome killing of partially delivered, viable infants in this country. Clinton vetoed the bill, allowing the murder of babies in the United States to go on with impunity. There is now evidence that their body parts and tissues are being sold for profit.

What do the words of our litany mean for these babies? Why do I not hear a voice of protest from the Mennonite church against this insanity occurring in our own society? Are we as a church ignorant, apathetic or both? Preheim said, "Ignorant and apathetic is not the way to go through … the Christian life." He's right. Let this apply to protection of unborn children as well as the concern about unbuilt bombs.—*David H.Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

Cover photo by San Jose (Calif.) Convention & Visitors Bureau

Gemeinschaft in the Silicon Valley

Anabaptist witness boots up amid boom.

by Rich Preheim

Brian Bauman

Sam Kho

The lexicon of California's Silicon Valley reflects a world on the technological—and financial—cutting edge: fast paced, high pressure and ever changing. Mushrooming electronics industries try to make their marks in DSP algorithm development, cross-functional projects and mixed-signal, physical-layer interfaces. From tiny garages and sprawling campuses, young upstarts and established front-runners provide multi-tenant service, internetworking and internet incubator facilities.

Into this slick and often incomprehensible techno-speak, Sam Kho wants to inject two more words: "gelassenheit" and "gemeinschaft."

Sam is a computer consultant and part of Bay Area Anabaptist Ministries (BAAM), a fledgling Silicon Valley group that meets weekly for worship. His objective has nothing to do with computer software or microprocessors—the sort of products that have made the Silicon Valley famous and many people wealthy—but everything to do with living in an environment that demands sacrifices of time and relationships for the sake of a cutthroat business.

"Gelassenheit" means yieldedness, while "gemeinschaft" broadly refers to the community of believers. Both concepts, which have long been hallmarks of Anabaptism, rearrange a Christian's priorities—from travel schedules, production deadlines and market shares to restoring relationships with God and with other people.

> If there's a place with rich young rulers, this is it.
>
> *—Sam Kho*

That is a message, Sam and other BAAM participants believe, that Silicon Valley denizens need and want. "They want to sit down, lie down, keep some tradition instead of chasing the new technology," says Lever Wang, who joined BAAM at its inception more than three years ago. "People want to slow down."

Ten- to 20-hour workdays, six days a week, are routine. People change jobs every three to six months. Companies perpetually reinvent themselves. The story is told of an IBM employee who regularly flies to and from Hong Kong in one day for meetings. Arrogance and aggression are pervasive business attitudes. Twenty-year-olds may become millionaires, but they have little meaningful interpersonal contact.

"I'm getting hundreds of emails every day," says Lever, a software developer. "We don't even call each other anymore."

BAAM was born out of Cupertino (Calif.) Mennonite Church, where Lever is a member, and First Mennonite Church of San Francisco to establish a Mennonite presence in the Silicon Valley. Some Church of the Brethren members joined the effort about a year and a half ago.

"There aren't enough Mennonite churches here," says Sam, who had been part of a local Mennonite Brethren congregation. "If there is an impetus for planting Anabaptist churches, I'm interested."

Study, sharing and prayer: Initially BAAM members gathered monthly, then biweekly. This fall, members began meeting Sunday afternoons, starting with a potluck, followed by an informal worship service. Members take turns leading the group in study, sharing and prayer. They meet in Lever's office, and attendance ranges from four to 10 people. About half the group works in the computer industry; others work in occupations such as education and nursing. Some, such as Lever and Sam, have been members of other Mennonite congregations, but others have not. One recent visitor said she had learned to know Mennonites from India while living in Philadelphia.

"There's a real desire among this group to share the Anabaptist vision," says Brian Bauman, interim Pacific Southwest Conference area minister who is working with BAAM. "And they are of the belief that the people they work with ... need a greater sense of God's presence, need a greater sense of community."

Lever provides testimony to that. Five or six years ago, he was feeling disconnected and stressed out. Now, he says, the BAAM gatherings help counterbalance the work-related pressures in his life. "I'm so refreshed after our meetings a lot of times," says Lever, who is married, with two children. "Instead of thinking about computers every day, ... the slowdown helps me a lot."

Before joining the Cupertino congregation

San Jose Convention & Visitors Bureau

five years ago, Lever's only knowledge of Mennonites was Mennonite Christian Hospital in his native Taiwan, which grew out of Mennonite Central Committee and later General Conference Mennonite Church work on the island. But Lever became attracted to the Mennonite emphases on peace, justice, nonconformity and believer's baptism. "I really want to advocate this message," he says.

So does Sam. He says the economic justice teachings of Ron Sider and John Howard Yoder are particularly appropriate for the Silicon Valley. "If there's a place with rich young rulers, this is it," he says.

Sam was introduced to Anabaptism by the 1986 movie *Witness*, about an Amish boy who sees a murder, set in Lancaster County, Pa. The Persian Gulf War then crystallized Sam's views on peace, and he decided to become affiliated with a Mennonite group. "Basically, I was willing to dress plain if that's what it took," he says.

Sam sought out a congregation when he moved to the Seattle area after graduation from college. He found Evergreen Mennonite Church, which did not require him to grow a beard and wear a plain coat. Sam joined a Mennonite Brethren congregation when he moved to California in 1993.

Resource center: BAAM is now considering what its presence should be in the area. Calling it "a way to begin," Lever recently started a resource center in his office, underwriting the $600 monthly rent for a 400-square-foot space. Now he is collecting books and videos on Anabaptism; he would even like to offer lectures. To help develop his ideas, Lever has visited Menno Hof, a Mennonite heritage and information center in Shipshewana, Ind., and the Tokyo Anabaptist Center in Japan.

Such education is obviously needed. Mennonites are still unknown, often confused with Mormons. But Sam notes that the name Amish gets recognition. "The [BAAM] group has joked about naming themselves the neo-Amish," he says.

As Sam was drawn to the church by the peace position, so he thinks it can attract others in the Silicon Valley. After all, he says, many people in the area are peace proponents but from a secular perspective. The challenge is to provide the religious underpinnings. "Nonresistance is different from the world's approach to peace," Sam says. "Christ needs to be the basis of that."

For Lever, that peace and justice emphasis also means the church needs to be multiethnic. "We should treat everyone equally," he says. "We should be open for different people to come in."

BAAM's small size could also appeal to the Silicon Valley's business approach. "A company is two people in a garage," Sam says. Once a company grows, moves out of the garage and into a larger office, he says, "It's time to sell the stock." Then the company is sinking more resources into facilities and salaries than into its product, the thinking goes. Likewise, a small congregation in a rented space may be seen as emphasizing its mission rather than maintaining overhead.

I really don't know what five years, 10 years from now will happen. If we can just do our work, if God's willing, something may happen.—*Lever Wang*

"It's the community that's church, not the building," Sam says.

Other ideas proposed for BAAM include developing house churches and relocating to an economically disadvantaged part of the Silicon Valley. "There are poor neighborhoods, too," Sam says.

As they try to discern their future, BAAM members say they want to emphasize faithfulness over effectiveness. Sam says he has no vision for the group other than being a New Testament church. "There is more than enough vision in the New Testament to last a lifetime," he says.

"I really don't know what five years, 10 years from now will happen," Lever says. "If we can just do our work, if God's willing, something may happen."

Brian Bauman

Lever Wang

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite.

Elizabeth Cutlett (UNICEF)

Advent reflections

I had to loosen my hold on the old to embrace the new.

A light has dawned in the darkness

by Tanya Chute

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned.
—Isaiah 9:2 NIV

This Christmas prophecy has taken on profound meaning for me as I have entered the alternating darkness and light of Central America. In the midst of painful memories of political repression and war, the ongoing reality of poverty and the devastation of Hurricane Mitch, the light of hope proclaims that liberty and peace are possible here, that health and education are valid aspirations for one's children, that houses and lives can be rebuilt.

Let me share glimpses of this light shining in the darkness.

Sharing pain: I spent the last two weeks of language school reading with my teacher a novel set in wartime Chaletenango, the district of El Salvador where I will live for three years. As I read of Lupe's grief at the torture and deaths of both her husband and son, of her granddaughter's vacillation between hope and fear for her "disappeared" father, I thought of Juana, a young woman in my parish whose sister and two brothers died in the guerrilla struggle.

My teacher reflected on her own memories of the costs of student activism in the face of military oppression in Guatemala: her principal's assassination and her husband's frustration at being denied his high school diploma, the gateway to further education and to being heard. We finished the class crying in one another's arms, sharing both the pain of the oppressed majority in Central America and their hope that their suffering might not be in vain.

Overwhelmed by inadequacy: In the face of immense obstacles to the Guatemalan people's struggle for life and dignity, I feel overwhelmed by my inadequacy to transform a system gone insane. In a small rural community turned upside down by Hurricane Mitch, I learned what it is to simply light a candle and give the little one has. Soon after Mitch, I joined a busload of foreign students who were studying Spanish. We descended Santa Catarina Ixtacuan with a load of corn, beans, milk, medicines and clothing. We unloaded the bus side by side with our Guatemalan partners, then followed them around town for a guided tour of the damage.

Here I saw three homes covered to the window ledges in mud. There I saw remains of two adobe dwellings whose collapse buried their inhabitants alive. And here, fault lines opened up in the heart of town under the church foundations, threatening any projects of reconstruction. The municipality may relocate but the only other land is 11 kilometers away and at an altitude prohibitive for all crops other than corn and beans.

The more I saw, the more our relief seemed like a pathetic attempt to prolong the slow starvation of a people denied access to land. How many—or how few—weeks or days of respite did our sacks and boxes represent? Yet the

The seed that falls to the ground and dies multiplies itself. The spirit of Christ is reborn in the community of the faithful. Perhaps the Christmas birth carries within it the promised rebirth of Easter.

mayor thanked us warmly and explained plans to distribute our gifts not only in this community but also in neighboring outposts inaccessible by bus.

Rebirth into relationship: My inner journey in El Salvador thus far has also been marked by alternating moments of darkness and light. Upon arrival, I spent two weeks learning about Mennonite Central Committee's peace commitment here, visiting the inspirational heart of liberation theology at Archbishop Oscar Romero's tomb, the assassination site of six Jesuit professors of the University of Central America in San Salvador, as well as a variety of grass-roots peace efforts. The church's ongoing theological and practical commitments were inspiring, but the challenge of defining my own role loomed large.

The darkness deepened as I started language study in Guatemala and entered into a week of bedbugs and rain. I felt like a cultural exile and was acutely aware of all I had left behind. A friend wrote to suggest this experience might be described in biblical terms as the descent into hell. Resurrection, then, arrived when the passing of Mitch literally brought sun out from the clouds and warm birthday celebrations announced a rebirth into relationship. Perhaps I had to loosen my hold on the old to embrace the new. I realized in a new way the spiritual truth embodied in the cycle of nature: "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24). Not only does life triumph over death, it draws its very sustenance from it. The seed that falls to the ground and dies multiplies itself. The spirit of Christ is reborn in the community of the faithful. Perhaps the Christmas birth carries within it the promised rebirth of Easter.

A light is shining in the darkness. A new day will dawn once more. Another spring will blossom. May we be faithful to the journey of hope.

Tanya Chute is from Gravenhurst, Ont. She is a member of McNeill Baptist Church in Hamilton. She wrote this piece in November 1998, shortly after Hurricane Mitch, at the beginning of her MCC assignment in La Ceiba, El Salvador.

Interrupted lives

I used to think interruptions were negative, but my perception has changed.

by Lois Coleman Neufeld

A long time ago I learned that life is full of interruptions. I used to think interruptions were negative, that they hindered me from getting my work done. But my perception has changed gradually over the years. The change was complete when I read a meditation by the president of Eastern Mennonite University, who said that the Christmas story is about lives filled with interruptions.

I agree. Almost everybody involved in the story had to deal with a major interruption in the normal events of their lives.

Mary, for instance, was a young woman, engaged to be married to a respectable man. Out of the blue, her life was interrupted by an angel who, according to Luke's account, lets her know that she has been chosen by God to be the mother of the Messiah. Mary's plans for marriage, you could say, were jeopardized by God's interruption in her life. Her response is incredible. She submits to and trusts God, and when the birth is over, she "ponders" the changes in her life because of Christ's coming.

The Christmas story reminds us that God comes to ordinary people, doing ordinary tasks, living ordinary lives.

Joseph had plans for a decent, upright family. God interrupted his life by presenting radical alternatives to traditions his community honored and respected. Despite all the questions, Joseph accepted this interruption and responded with obedience to God's coming into his life.

The shepherds were only doing their job when God interrupted them. They were terrified. They were prepared for thieves, for lions and other wild animals, for sheep problems, but they weren't expecting representatives of God. Their shock quickly turned to anticipation, and they couldn't wait to see Jesus.

Jesus' birth interrupted the wise men's lives, Herod's rule over Judea and Simeon's and Anna's lives. It affected the ordinary and normal events of people's lives.

The Christmas story reminds us that God comes to ordinary people, doing ordinary tasks, living ordinary lives. From the accounts we have, these people were not expecting God to interrupt their lives in the way it happened. But the important part of the story is how each person responded.

May we be granted eyes to see and hearts to respond to God's coming in our lives.

Lois Coleman Neufeld is a member of Highland Mennonite Brethren Church in Calgary. She is also affiliated with West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship in Philadelphia.

Coming into seed

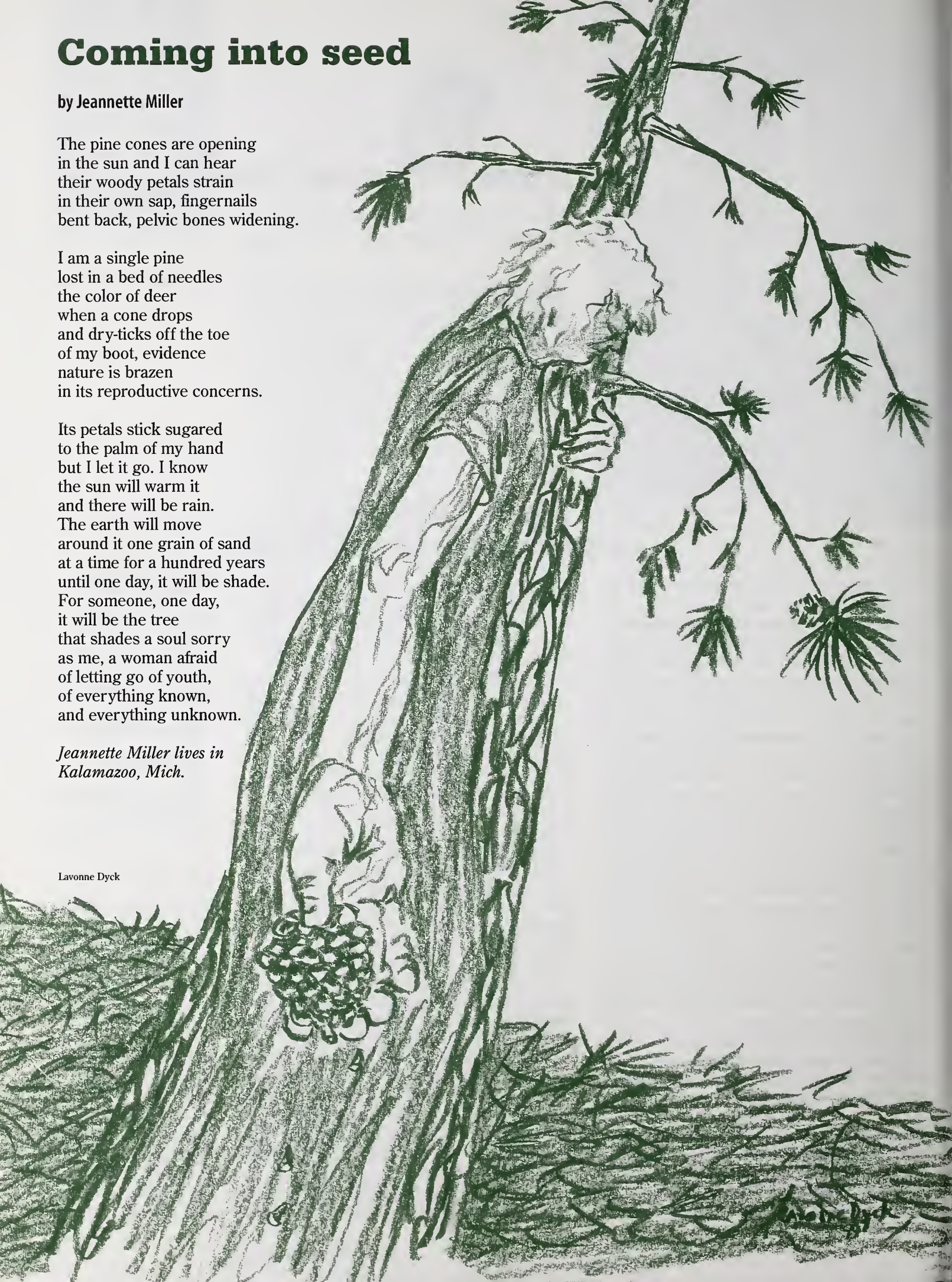
by Jeannette Miller

The pine cones are opening
in the sun and I can hear
their woody petals strain
in their own sap, fingernails
bent back, pelvic bones widening.

I am a single pine
lost in a bed of needles
the color of deer
when a cone drops
and dry-ticks off the toe
of my boot, evidence
nature is brazen
in its reproductive concerns.

Its petals stick sugared
to the palm of my hand
but I let it go. I know
the sun will warm it
and there will be rain.
The earth will move
around it one grain of sand
at a time for a hundred years
until one day, it will be shade.
For someone, one day,
it will be the tree
that shades a soul sorry
as me, a woman afraid
of letting go of youth,
of everything known,
and everything unknown.

Jeannette Miller lives in
Kalamazoo, Mich.



Lavonne Dyck

AN INVITATION FOR NOMINATIONS

Who were the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century?

Everywhere you turn these days, someone is listing the best, the greatest, the most something or other of the setting century or even the millennium: ball players, books, inventions, movies, music, politicians. But if Y2K means anything at all, it should call us to reflect on our faithfulness. A benchmark occasion such as the arrival of the 2000s is a wonderful opportunity to assess where we've been, how we got to where we are and where we are going.

As one way to do that, *The Mennonite* wants to celebrate the work of those individuals who have had the greatest influence on life and belief in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church during the 20th century. In the spirit of the discerning community, we are inviting nominations of the disciples and prophets among us who have helped us be true to the God of all ages.

For publication in a future issue of *The Mennonite,* we want to know who you think has profoundly shaped us: the pastors and the professors, the administrators and the authors, the missionaries and the visionaries.

The only criterion is that the nominees be Mennonites who lived and served for a significant part of the 20th century. That rules out spiritual ancestors such as Menno Simons and John Oberholtzer, whose legacies are still with us but as people have been long gone.

While our focus is on the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, nominees do not have to be limited to GC and MC members. Our lives have been affected by the ministries of those in other Mennonite groups, particularly in the context of organizations such as Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite World Conference.

Nominate as many people as you like. And include a brief statement about why each person is being nominated. This is not an election. But with your counsel, the final list will be determined by *The Mennonite* editorial staff and will be printed in an issue early next year.

And then you can argue with us.

Send nominations to:

***The Mennonite,* P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114**
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Tornado that destroyed Michigan church and parsonage called 'blessing in disguise'

COMINS, Mich.—Comins Mennonite Church hopes to be home for Christmas.

A July 3 tornado destroyed the congregation's meetinghouse and parsonage, as well as 26 other buildings in the tiny town of Comins. But with help from Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), the parsonage has been rebuilt and the church building is in the finishing stages.

Before the storm, which caused only minor injuries, the small, white, country church was surrounded by beautiful oak trees. After the tornado, however, the trees were stripped bare and the buildings were reduced to piles of broken wood, shingles and insulation.

For the people of the Comins congregation, who number close to 100, rebuilding was the only option.

"We just didn't know how it was going to happen," says Paul Cleaves, chair of the church board. "Soon after the tornado, [MDS] Michigan Unit chair Ken Sutter came to us and asked us if we wanted to rebuild. We had a church meeting and then met with unit area coordinator Jim Scott, who became the project coordinator, and he made rebuilding realistic. After that meeting we knew that rebuilding the church was possible."

Work started on the parsonage first. A building blitz on Aug. 26, led by 25 MDS volunteers, raised the building in three days. On Sept. 1, 50 local and MDS volunteers put up the church frame and the entire roof in a four-day building blitz. MDS volunteers continued to work on the rebuilding project through October. Comins members hope to be in their new church by Christmas.

"Having to rebuild our church was a blessing in disguise," Cleaves says. "All the beautiful oak trees are gone, but they blocked the view of the church from the road. A lot of people didn't know there was a church here because all the trees covered it. Now all the trees are down and you can see the church from the road. That's important. We hope that now when people drive by, they'll see the building and want to come. When the work is finished, we will have a 29-foot lighted steeple and cross."

Church member Florence Rhoads says the congregation had wanted a larger fellowship hall. "We now have a building that can be a central meeting place," she says. "The Lord has blessed us with a building big enough to accommodate more people from the community."

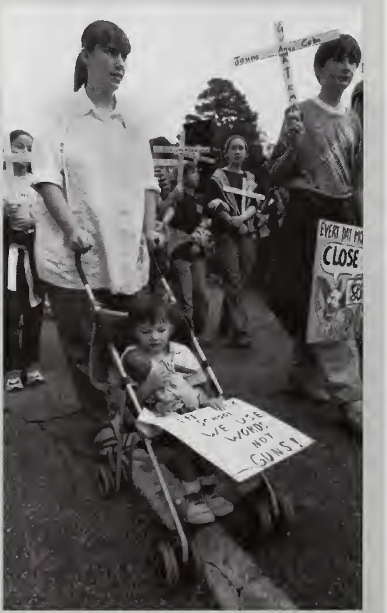
"There is a lot of community interest in the [rebuilding]," says Louise Knepp, another church member. "People drive by all the time to see what's happening. We had a celebration-of-life service on Aug. 1, and many people from the community who don't normally attend Comins were there.

"It was so sad to see the church destroyed. My heart ached. Now when I look at what has happened since then and how God has provided for us, it's mind-boggling. It's just awesome. We want to move into the new building and have a revival. There are so many people who need God so badly, and we hope they find him as a result of our new church."

Says Rhoads: "We're waiting to see what the Lord is going to do in the year 2000. Miracles will happen. We've just seen the first of it now."
—Marisa Doncevic of MDS News Service

SOA not OK, protesters say

Sarah Lubienski and her 3-year-old daughter, Ella, from Des Moines (Iowa) Mennonite Church join an estimated 12,000 protesters at Fort Benning, Ga., in calling for the closure of the U.S. Army School of the Americas. The annual demonstration, held Nov. 20-21, protests the school, located at Fort Benning, which has trained some of the worst human-rights abusers in Latin America. This year's event drew nearly 300 Mennonites. The Lubienskis were among 4,400 people who committed civil disobedience by marching onto the grounds of Fort Benning. They were not among those arrested.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Ryan Beiler

Three decades after Vietnam, anti-war protesters extoll lessons of sensitivity over polarization

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—The saying goes that if you can remember the 1960s, you couldn't have experienced them. But Terry Unruh says not only does he remember that tumultuous era, he learned from it.

"We need to challenge those things that need challenging, only do it more sensitively," Unruh recently told a Bethel College audience.

During a period of widespread anti-Vietnam War protests, campus demonstrations in 1969 catapulted the small North Newton school into the mainstream media's glare, appearing on national TV newscasts and in the pages of *Life* magazine. On Nov. 22, Bethel hosted morning and evening presentations to tell stories and explore lessons learned over the past 30 years.

Unruh was Bethel's student government president in 1969 and is now a lawyer in Wichita, Kan. Without the influence of the '60s, he says, "I don't think I'd be in civil rights or discrimination law."

But Unruh also lamented the polarizing effect of the era: college against town, peaceniks against military veterans, children against their parents.

That was echoed by Dan Clark, who in 1969 was a Hesston (Kan.) College student active in the anti-war movement. Today he is a professional conflict mediator and consultant in Muscatine, Iowa. Back in his college days, Clark said he thought his message was so important that he could "interrupt the conversations" of others. That is no longer the case.

"Over the years ... it has become more and more important to me to help everybody get heard, to help everybody get into the conversation, to help everybody find that chance to tell his or her story, because that's where peace comes from," Clark said.

Not all students participated in anti-war activities. As a Bethel student, Sondra Bandy Koontz had clashed with her politically active father over the Vietnam War, which she opposed. But she also knew the price of that opposition and realized how it was setting people and communities against each other.

Koontz, now Bethel's director of advancement, told of watching from the library as a group set out from campus to march to Wichita in protest of the war.

"I believed what they believed, that the Vietnam War was wrong," she said. "But mostly that day in the library, I felt like an outsider. Family ties were too strongly felt to make it possible to walk outside and join their group."

At the same time college students were protesting Vietnam, many members of the military also felt the war was wrong, said Dale Suderman, a Vietnam War veteran who later actively demonstrated against the war. But he said military personnel felt alienated from the college students because the students had draft exemptions.

But Suderman, a former director of Mennonite Voluntary Service and now a counselor in Chicago, encouraged the continued pursuit of an ideal goal, like the anti-war protesters of three decades ago. "Your call to idealism is to act now ... and let history judge if you're right," he said.—*Rich Preheim*

Faith grows among Kenyan group in 1999

OLEPOLOS, Kenya—A group of Maasai tribesmen have declared that Jesus Christ was the ultimate sacrifice. As a result, they have abandoned the traditional practice of "Olkateng Ol Baa"—sacrificing the bull of iniquities.

"This was a fantastic victory for the Lord," says Clair Good, Eastern Mennonite Missions worker among the Maasai of Kenya. "It has been a point of contention for many in the past."

The decision to eliminate the bull sacrifice has been one of many highlights in the emergence of a community of Maasai Christians in Olepolos, reports Good. He and his wife, Beth, have been working in Olepolos since 1997.

Earlier this year, a seminar on cell groups resulted in repentance of community sins. That included repentance of Maasai men who had taken part in a recent war with a neighboring tribe. The seminar also addressed the spiritual condition of tribal households.

"The next week, I saw for the first time a Maasai man sitting with his wife reading the Scriptures together," Good says.

In August, 30 new Maasai Christians were baptized, including some of the most serious abusers of alcohol in the community, Good says. Using mostly church offering funds, a multipurpose building is expected to be completed soon, to be used as a house of worship, community meeting hall, nursery school and medical clinic. Attendance at Sunday morning worship is about 100.

Good dreams of the emergence of a Maasai pastor and even sending missionaries from Olepolos. "At times I wonder if I will see the fulfillment of this vision," he says. "The battle is real, and the victory is real."—*EMM News Service*

Indiana Mennonites rally against killings

The Nov. 17 racially motivated shooting of two African-Americans in Elkhart, Ind., left Geri Lehman Mumaw shaken. That's why she turned out for a Thanksgiving morning vigil at the site of the murders.

"I thought it could have been my son," Mumaw told the *Elkhart Truth*. "I adopted a Hispanic boy, and he walks this path going to the library. It hit me hard. They were after anyone nonwhite."

Mumaw, of Southside Fellowship in Elkhart, was one of a number of Mennonites who joined hundreds of other people at the vigil.

"We will not be silent in the face of hatred," said Janeen Bertsche Johnson, campus pastor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart.

Franklin Breckenridge, president of the Indiana National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, read a statement from national president Kweisi Mfume. Breckenridge is a 1991 AMBS graduate and pastor of an Elkhart African Methodist Episcopal congregation.

GC, MC churches to be part of survey

NEWTON, Kan.—Seven hundred General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations will receive surveys in January 2000 as part of a nationwide research project being done in conjunction with the U.S. national census.

The study, called the Cooperative Congregational Study Project (CCSP), is coordinated by Carl S. Dudley and David A. Rozen at Hartford (Conn.) Seminary's Center for Social and Religious Research. The goal is to produce a comprehensive picture of congregational life in the United States.

The CCSP is the most extensive data-gathering effort of its kind undertaken in North America, Dudley says. It represents an unprecedented attempt to survey about 20,000 congregations in 40 faith groups. The survey will also include Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i and Orthodox church organizations.

The study is funded by the Lilly Endowment and by contributions from the participating groups.

Each group has developed its own questionnaire. But researchers have spent the past four years working out a common set of questions to be asked.

The advisory team representing Anabaptist faith is comprised of Karen Klassen Harder, business professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; James E. Horsch, editor with Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa.; Dave Linscheid, communications director for the General Conference Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.; and Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Elkhart, Ind.

The goals for Mennonite involvement in the CCSP are: (1) to give a clear picture of how distinctive Mennonites are in comparison with other religious groups, and (2) to establish a baseline of information about Mennonite congregations at the beginning of the 21st century.—*GCMC News Service*

Business association meets in Indonesia

About 140 people attended last month's annual meeting of the Association of Indonesian Mennonite Business and Professional Persons (HUPMI) to discuss "Building Community."

Each seminar was addressed by an Indonesian and a guest from overseas in order to increase international dialogue. Among the international presenters were Ben Sprunger, president of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, and Peter Huang, director of Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien, Taiwan.

There are 10 such Mennonite-affiliated associations of business and professional people around the world. The Indonesian group expressed hope for a meeting with other national organizations at next year's Mennonite Economic Development Associates annual meeting, to be held in Vancouver.—*Frits Triman*

Christmas Sharing Fund to aid Turkey, Chicago

ELKHART, Ind.—The 1999 Christmas Sharing Fund will help earthquake victims in Turkey and train future church leaders in Chicago.

Turkey is struggling to recover after the August quake that killed more than 17,000 people. Christmas Sharing Fund contributions will help purchase winterized tents, water filtration units, heaters and school supplies. The funds will be channeled through Mennonite Central Committee and Rosedale Mennonite Missions, which are working with a coalition of churches in Turkey.

Contributions will also help lay the foundation for the Chicago Education Initiative, a cooperative project of Goshen (Ind.) College, Illinois Conference, Mennonite Board of Missions and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. The initiative will train future church leaders who can't afford to attend Mennonite schools and seminaries outside the city.

"I encourage congregations to use this giving opportunity to express the joy we experience in celebrating Christ's birth," says George Stoltzfus, Mennonite Church USA general secretary.

For more information, contact Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 219-294-7131, rbyler@juno.com.

MBM photo by Grant Rissler

Communion and reunion

Sisters Ruth (left) and Rhoda Ressler break bread during a Communion service at an Oct. 29-31 reunion celebrating 50 years of Mennonite Board of Missions work in Japan. The Resslers, now living in Orrville, Ohio, and daughters of MBM's first missionary, J.A. Ressler, served with MBM in Japan from 1953 to 1973. The reunion, held at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in Mount Pleasant, Pa., drew more than 50 former MBM Japan workers. The first MBM workers arrived in that country on Dec. 17, 1949.

U.S. moderator-elect named EMS dean

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA and moderator of Lancaster Conference, has been appointed dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS), Harrisonburg, effective July 1, 2000.

Stutzman will succeed George R. Brunk III, who has served as dean for the past 22 years. Brunk is now on sabbatical but plans to return next year as professor of New Testament. Sara Wenger Shenk is serving as interim dean.

Stutzman holds a doctorate in rhetoric and communication from Temple University in Philadelphia, a master's degree in communication from the University of Cincinnati and a master's degree in religion from EMS.

He has been an EMS associate professor of church ministries since 1998 while maintaining his home in Mount Joy, Pa. Stutzman will resign his position as Lancaster moderator to become dean.

CPT starts campaign against violent toys

CHICAGO—Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) is looking for 500 North American congregations to approach the management of local toy stores about the violent toys on their shelves.

Studies indicate that aggressive play leads to acts of real aggression and desensitizes children to violence. "Engaging the local distributors of violent toys is one way to break the cycle of violence," says Kryss Chupp, CPT training coordinator.

Among the violent toys noted by CPT are video games such as Resident Evil 3, wrestling action figures such as Lex "Torture Rack" Lugar, and toy guns that look and sound like the real things.—*CPT News Service*

Urban ministry leaders hold second meeting

CHICAGO—Jeff Wright thinks making mistakes should play a prominent role in urban ministries.

"Believe in the power of failure to educate," Wright told the second annual Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) Urban Leaders Network meeting in Chicago Nov. 16-17. "The goal is to find out what doesn't work and to not do that again."

Wright, MBM urban ministry director for Los Angeles, was one of 50 people from 30 cities who gathered to find strength in common experiences and discuss strategies for bringing renewal and reconciliation in their urban settings.

"It saddens me when I hear people say, 'We need more church planters; where can we find them?' " said Hector Urbina of El Paso, Texas. "We need to start a movement to create [congregation-based] leadership development systems to supply leaders from our own churches."—*MBM News Service*

Bluffton cited as character-developing college

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College has been included in the recent edition of *The Templeton Guide: Colleges That Encourage Character Development.* Bluffton was one of 100 schools named to the Templeton Honor Roll for "comprehensive commitment and programs that inspire students to lead ethical and civic-minded lives." Other Mennonite colleges included in the guide are Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Peace conference looks to the future

GOSHEN, Ind.—More than 100 people met in Goshen Nov. 13 to discuss "Anabaptist Peace and Justice: 2020 Visions." Former Mennonite Central Committee executive secretary John A. Lapp gave the keynote address. Other presenters included Zenebe Abebe, Goshen (Ind.) College vice president for multicultural education; J.R. Burkholder, Goshen College professor emeritus of ethics and religion; and Karl Shelly, pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen. The meeting also included panel discussions and worship.

by the way ...

Victor Martinez in 1984 became Mennonite Central Committee country representative in his native Guatemala, the first non-North American to hold such a position in any country. —*Kairos*

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Births

Alderfer, Isaac Ryan, Oct. 23, to Douglas and Kathleen (Gehman) Alderfer, Harrisonburg, Va.

Becker, Seth Michael, Sept. 15, to Crissa (Weaver) and Joel Becker, Richardson, Texas.

Boldy, Ethan Tyler and Noah Patrick (twins), Nov. 11, to Jim and Nikki (Steiner) Boldy, Newport News, Va.

Bomberger, Micah Ray, Oct. 25, to Kathy (Hurst) and Robert Bomberger, Lititz, Pa.

Eshleman, Anthony Dean, Oct. 14, to Dean and Twila (Yoder) Eshleman, Goshen, Ind.

Fetterman, Lydia Anne, Oct. 15, to Amie and Dan Fetterman, Kirkwood, Pa.

Furbeck, Erika Renee, Nov. 4, to Ronda and Scott Furbeck, Kalona, Iowa.

Glick, Caleb Robert, Nov. 7, to Milt and Stacy (Nunemaker) Glick, Goshen, Ind.

Gotwals, Christopher Daniel, Nov. 4, to Chris and Kathy (Mantz) Gotwals, Bechtelsville, Pa.

Hixon, Brayden William, Oct. 14, to Bill and Karena (Miller) Hixon, Goshen, Ind.

Horsch, Steven Jon, Nov. 12, to Jon and Maria (Rodriguez) Horsch, Goshen, Ind.

Huffman, Jadyn Alexandra, Oct. 26, to Kim (Bontrager) and Roger Huffman, Goshen, Ind.

Kliewer, Jacalyn Kay, Nov. 6, to Dick and Mindy (Kupfersmith) Kliewer, Aurora, Neb.

Lockwood, Drea Marie, Nov. 8, to Diane (Miller) and Dustin Lockwood, Goshen, Ind.

Martin, Nathaniel James, Nov. 8, to Bill and Karen (Reinhardt) Martin, Bristol, Ind.

Miller, Dustin Dale, Nov. 9, to Angela (Mast) and Joel Miller, Bristol, Ind.

Miller, Kendal Eugene, Nov. 6, to Diane (Beck) and Wendell Miller, Winona Lake, Ind.

Nester, Calvin Marshall, Oct. 18, to Marcia (Hatter) and Raymond Nester, Waynesboro, Va.

Osborne, Noah Conrad, Oct. 20, to Gregory Jones and Jan Osborne, Wichita, Kan.

Ott, Megan Joy, Nov. 9, to Michele (Epp) and Steve Ott, Papillion, Neb.

Rusel, Garvin Wren, Nov. 7, to Colin (Rupley) and Lora (Gisel) Rusel, Cincinnati.

Schlabach, Callie Grace, Nov. 1, to Amy (Wiseman) and Brad Schlabach, Sarasota, Fla.

Schrock, Joya Christine, Oct. 29, to Leon and Robin (Schlabach) Schrock, Kalona, Iowa.

Schrock, Kalee Sue, Oct. 23, to Debi (Coblentz) and Mark Schrock, Burr Oak, Mich.

Shoemaker, Carley Olivia, Oct. 18, to Alonzo and Megan Shoemaker, Oxford, Pa.

Smith, Alan Lee, Oct. 26, to Lester and Marie (Cuevas) Smith, Perkinston, Miss.

Sommer, Andrew James, Oct. 8, to Mark and Trina Sommer, Tremont, Ill.

Steinhauer, Thomas Austin, Oct. 10, to Tom and Trista (Pike) Steinhauer, Quarryville, Pa.

Vollmer, Nikole LaRue, Sept. 20, to David and Laura (Buckingham) Vollmer, Grand Island, Neb.

Yoder, Alyse Noel, Nov. 10, to Brian and Renee (Ropp) Yoder, Sarasota, Fla.

Zook, Jacob Daniel, Oct. 12, to Jill and Tony Zook, Landenberg, Pa.

Marriages

Bauman/Brubacher: Rod Bauman, Elmira, Ont., and Gloria Brubacher, Elmira, Oct. 23 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Friesen/Roth: Amber Friesen, Lancaster, Pa., and David Roth, Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 30 at Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Hafner/Young: Diane Hafner, Morton, Ill., and Todd Young, East Peoria, Ill., Oct. 23 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Klingelsmith/McKiddy: Lori Klingelsmith, Archbold, Ohio, and Marty McKiddy, Williamsburg, Ky., Nov. 5 at Memphis, Tenn.

MacKinnon/Miller: John MacKinnon, Vienna, Va., and Mary Beth Miller, Falls Church, Va., Oct. 23 at Oakton Church of the Brethren, Oakton, Md.

Martin/Poulseen: Teresa Martin, Buhler, Kan., and Robert Poulseen, McPherson, Kan., Nov. 20 at Hutchinson, Kan.

McLaughlin/Richard: Sandra McLaughlin, Wooster, Ohio, and Phil Richard, Creston, Ohio, Oct. 23 at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Metzger/Oke: Lisa Metzger, St. Jacobs, Ont., and Paul Oke, Toronto, Oct. 16 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Miller/Nelson: Wendell Miller, Engadine, Mich., and Debra Nelson, Shipshewana, Ind., Nov. 6 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Schrock/Yoars: Kenny Schrock, Arthur, Ill., and Melissa Yoars, Arcola, Ill., Nov. 6 at Arthur.

Swartzentruber/Wansley: Anita Zendt Swartzentruber, Meridian, Miss., and Christopher Wansley, Meridian, Nov. 20 at Jubilee Mennonite Church, Meridian.

Deaths

Aeschliman, Lois Nofziger, 75, Wauseon, Ohio, died Nov. 6 in an automobile accident. Spouse: Galen Aeschliman. Parents: Harley and Fannie Aeschliman Nofziger (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Philip, Brian, Gloria Gingerich, Shirley Crossgrove, Charlene Roth, Linda Stuckey; 20 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 12 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Aschenbrenner, Lillian Nafziger, 91, Washington, Ill., died Nov. 1. Spouse: Edward Aschenbrenner (deceased). Parents: William and Emma Nafziger (deceased). Survivors: children Donna Wind, Russell, Gerald; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 5 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

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Aust, Rose Schrock, 82, Elkhart, Ind., died Nov. 3 of heart complications. Spouse: George Aust (deceased). Parents: Nathan and Lucy Steury Schrock (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 6 at Goshen, Ind.

Cender, Mahlon, 70, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 10. Spouse: Esther Berkey Cender. Parents: Emery and Mattie Stalter Cender (deceased). Other survivors: children Judy Saylor, Beth, Jeanine Kaufman, Jonathan; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Dettweiler, Edward, 72, Reedley, Calif., died Nov. 1 of heart failure. Spouse: Katharine Dettweiler. Other survivors: children Stella Bohn, Kathleen Mondragon, Mary Seale; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Ebersole, Ruth Erb, 103, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 6. Spouse: Clarence Ebersole (deceased). Parents: Tilman and Lizzie Hess Erb (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Yoder, Judy Amstutz, Robert; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Gray, Barbara Gosling, 36, Floradale, Ont., died Sept. 14, of a heart attack. Spouse: Chris Gray. Parents: Shirley (deceased) and Ross Gosling. Other survivors: children Neil, Ursula. Funeral: Sept. 17 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Harder, Harry, 82, Reedley, Calif., died Oct. 2 of cancer and pneumonia. Survivors: children Carol Fransen, Larry, Susan Pries, John; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Harshbarger, Orrie, 86, West Liberty, Ohio, died Nov. 3. Spouse: Geneva Brenneman Harshbarger. Parents: Charles and Salina Hartzler Harshbarger (deceased). Other survivors: children Paul, Kathleen, Jane Kauffman, Linda Heiser; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 6 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Hostetler, Erma Speigle, 89, Davidsville, Pa., died Nov. 1. Spouse: Norman Hostetler Sr. (deceased). Parents: Lawrence and Sadie Blough Speigle (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Kolb, Norman Jr., Leon, Robert, David, Linda Knepper, Judy Mullett; 27 grandchildren; 43 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville.

Hostetter, Ruth Stoltzfus Stauffer, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 5. Spouse: (1st) Paul Stauffer (deceased); (2nd) John Hostetter (deceased). Parents: John and Priscilla Mast Stoltzfus (deceased). Survivors: stepdaughter Gladys Burke; seven stepgrandchildren; 17 step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 8 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Hurst, Levi Martin, 96, Lititz, Pa., died Oct. 28 of a heart attack. Spouse: Mary Witmer Hurst (deceased). Parents: David and Mary Martin Hurst (deceased). Survivors: children Jewel Long, David; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 31 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

Johnson, Verda Regier, 71, Halstead, Kan., died Nov. 13 of cancer. Spouse: Errol Johnson. Parents: Ed and Helen Dalke Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Pam Doyle, Jan Higdon, Debbie Reed; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 16 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead.

King, Betty Keller, 75, Roanoke, Ill., died Oct 23. Spouse: Harley King (deceased). Parents: Emanuel and Flossie Ulrich Keller (deceased). Survivors: children Harley, Mark, Bonnie Villarreal, Linda, Anita, Joy Willoughby; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 27 at Metamora, Ill.

Krehbiel, LaVerne Lee, 68, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Oct. 15 of cancer. Parents: Arthur and Lena Graber Krehbiel (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 19 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

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Kurtz, Christian, 98, Morgantown, Pa., died Nov. 9. Spouse: Elsie Kurtz (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lydia Kurtz (deceased). Other survivors: children Lena Carpenter, Elam, John, Paul, Chester, Calvin, Caroline Plank; 38 grandchildren; 103 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 12 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown.

Lichti, Florence Eichelberger, 85, North Newton, Kan., died Oct. 29 of cancer. Spouse: Nick Lichti (deceased). Parents: Joel and Katie Lauber Eichelberger (deceased). Survivors: children Gerry, Janis Glascock, Jolene Yoder, Don, Cheryl. Funeral: Nov. 1 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley, Neb.

Martin, Erma Studer, 83, Hopedale, Ill., died Nov. 15. Spouse: Willard Martin (deceased). Parents: Chris and Emma Bachman Studer (deceased). Survivors: children Evelyn Steiger, Mary Lou Oekel; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Miller, Audrey Croninger, 79, Fairview, Mich., died Nov. 9 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Earl Miller (deceased). Parents: Alvin and Magdelena Towns Croninger (deceased). Survivors: children Earlene Smith, Dean, Mark, Jim; 12 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Fairview Mennonite Church.

Miller, Carl, 72, Gulfport, Miss., died Nov. 7. Spouse: Elsie Miller. Parents: Simon and Lydia Bender Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Brian, Kay Miller Boehr; one grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 11 at Gulfport.

Mimma, Martha Wakefield, 79, Springs, Pa., died Oct. 22. Spouse: James Mimma (deceased); Parents: Harry and Sylvania Wakefield (deceased). Survivors: children Clara Mason, Harry; five grandchildren; five great-grandhchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Grantsville, Md.

Rediger, Dallas, 82, Wayland, Iowa, died Nov. 5. Spouse: Ruth Sutter Rediger. Parents: Jacob and Lavina Hershberger Rediger (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Gary, Mary Yoder, Nancy Reschly; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 8 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Regier, Wilbert, 80, Wichita, Kan., died Oct. 29 of cancer. Spouse: Cora Lee Regier. Parents: Ed and Helen Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Jarold, Barbara Mize, Sandra, Connie; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kan.

Roth, Ester Martin, 89, Morton, Ill., died Oct. 21. Spouse: Elmer Roth (deceased). Parents: Peter and Margrit Smetter Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Norm, Gene, Darlene; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 25 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Schertz, James, 61, Low Point Ill., died Oct. 15. Spouse: Esther Litwiller Schertz. Parents: Paul and Ada Springer Schertz. Other survivors: children Phillip, Jennifer Dean, Pamela Street, Jill Carr; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at Metamora, Ill.

Schwartz, Veradine Violet Voran, 80, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Oct. 25 of cancer. Spouse: Arthur Schwartz. Parents: Edward and Lydia Flickner Voran (deceased). Other survivors: children Patricia Henning, Rachel Tracy, Leland, Dallas; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 29 at First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie.

Swartz, Clarence, 74, McAlisterville, Pa., died Oct. 13. Spouse: Jane Swartz. Other survivors: children Linda Blough, Darlene Varner, Carol Neidig, Nancy Diem. Funeral: Oct. 16 at Delaware Mennonite Church, Thompsontown, Pa.

Wyse, Warren, 76, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 2. Spouse: Nellie Wyse (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Mabel Wyse (deceased). Survivors: children Jerry, Ronald, Kenneth, Sandra Miller, Cynthia Preston; 15 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 6 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Yoder, Paul, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 15. Spouse: Ruth Burkholder Yoder. Parents: Harvey and Eliza Newcomer Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Carlton, Marvin; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 17 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Yothers, Mary Trauger, 92, Bedminster, Pa., died Oct. 11. Parents: Samuel and Emma Trauger (deceased). Survivors: children Grace High, Lois Kerver, Mary Engleman, Martha Duke, James, Paul; 12 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 16 at Perkasie, Pa.

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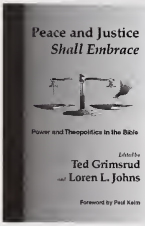

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  Contact Steven Rudiger at Mennonite Press Inc., 316-283-4680.

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- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School** needs ***English teacher*** for 7th and 8th grades by the end of January 2000. This person would be part of a two-person English department instructing 101 students. Candidates are invited to send resumes to Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; fax 717-394-4944; email DaveH@lgms.pvt.k12.pa.us

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, camp/conference center 45 miles SE of Pittsburgh, seeks one full-time salaried ***maintenance person*** and one part-time ***cook***. Lodging available. Staff invests personal skills to host God's ministry in a natural setting. Call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056 for application or resume to Laurelville, Rt. 5 Box 145, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666; email info@laurelville.org

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  Please send a completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (MLI available from any conference office) to: John Hockman, search committee chairperson, P.O. Box 156, Topeka, IN 46571; 219-593-2389; fax 219-593-2150; email hockman@kuntrynet.com

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  Send or fax resume to Mennonite Mutual Aid, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264.

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- **Southside Fellowship** seeks half-time ***pastor*** for two-person pastoral team. Good opportunity for experienced pastor interested in continuing seminary studies. Send resume to Pastoral Search Committee, Southside Fellowship, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

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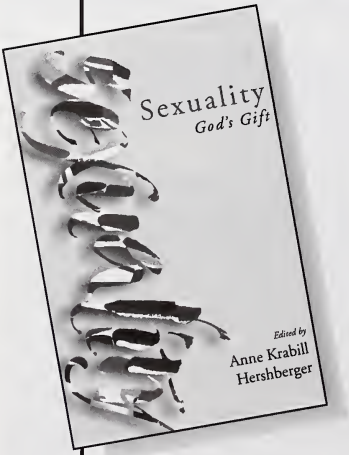

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Soccer by cell phone

by Melanie Zuercher

Jim Amstutz loves soccer. He has been coaching for years—most recently the grades 5-8 team at Quakertown (Pa.) Christian School, a team that includes his two sons. Quakertown has racked up a stellar record in the last two years, undefeated at home and with only a couple of losses overall in the regular season. This year they played for the league championship.

The game took place on the afternoon of Oct. 30, and Jim listened to the last half-minute via a cellular phone held by his assistant coach's wife. Jim wasn't at this game, arguably the most important of the season. That's because, in addition to coaching soccer and pastoring West Swamp Mennonite Church in Quakertown, he is also chair of the Commission on Home Ministries. CHM, the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada met as separate commissions and boards, as well as jointly, Oct. 28-30 in Winnipeg, and Jim was there.

He shared the news of his team's victory with others, and it was easy to tell from the emotion in his eyes and voice how proud he was of his team and what it had cost him to give up being at that game.

The conventional wisdom in Mennonite congregations across North America is that the process of integrating the Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada is proceeding at roughly the pace of climate change and is about as interesting to watch. "Didn't we take care of this in Wichita back in 1995?" people often ask.

In my job as News Service editor for what is still legally known as the General Conference Mennonite Church, I have attended many meetings. Some people are energized by meetings, but I am not. Some people get a kick out of reading reports of meetings, but those people are not editing the Mennonite periodicals.

As I sat through the mission agency meetings, I knew that another article detailing decisions and outlining procedures—even one spiced with a few pithy phrases—would not serve the best use of my time. Yet I also knew it was not a waste of time to be there.

Jim Amstutz's news about his young soccer team, coming close to the end of three days of hard work (even more time spent by the mission transformation team working to shape a vision for Mennonite mission that will help the North American church look both inward and outward), finally crystallized for me why it was a privilege to be part of these meetings. Jim was not the only one who had to make a choice—whether it was to give up a grandchild's birthday party, a sunny fall weekend spent with a loved one or a championship soccer game—to attend mission agency meetings in Canada. Board and commission members are not paid for this work, yet it is obvious they see it as a job that deserves their careful attention, perhaps even as their own call to mission.

I still feel bruised by the conflict during the delegate sessions at St. Louis 99 that centered around membership in the new Mennonite Church USA and the mostly unnamed agenda of gay and lesbian Mennonites and the churches that welcome them. But the mission agency meetings in Winnipeg at the end of October reminded me that what is truly at the heart of being the church of Jesus Christ is not who is out, but that we desire to share the gospel we believe is so good that everyone should want to be in. As Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for CHM, put it, "Our dream is to have every person a missional person, every congregation a missional congregation."

I have been frustrated about the slow pace of denominational integration, but to observe these mission boards at work was to realize that the relatively small size of the North American Mennonite church, which makes working by consensus possible, is a gift. To work this way requires sitting down, face-to-face, and listening to each other, even though people may be poles apart. It means learning to see each other as struggling human beings trying to discern God's voice. It means worshiping together at the end of the meetings and promising to pray regularly for others, despite the fact that their theology is running on a different track from yours.

Despite having to give up important pieces of their lives-outside-committee, members of the mission commissions and boards showed in words and actions that they believe it is a privilege to be a part of shaping Mennonite mission vision and structure for the future. Jim Amstutz said, "This is transforming us."

May that be so across the emerging Mennonite denomination in North America. If it is, it will have been worth the wait.

Melanie Zuercher lives in Newton, Kan.

Board and commission members are not paid for this work, yet it is obvious they see it as a job that deserves their careful attention, perhaps even as their own call to mission.

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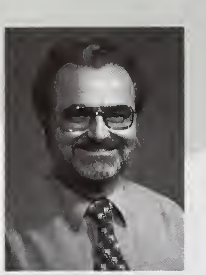

J. Lorne Peachey

Familiarity can breed awe

Christmas 1999 will be my 60th. If this year is like all the others, I'll hear the prophecies from Isaiah, the story of Jesus' birth from Luke 2 and the account of the visit of the Magi from Matthew 2 at least three times each Christmas. That's 180 reminders for me of what Christmas is about so far.

If familiarity does not breed contempt with Scripture, I must confess that it can lead to boredom. Too often I find myself tuning out mentally when someone announces a familiar Christmas biblical passage. It takes real work for me to get beyond the indifference that often comes with the familiar.

For Advent 1999 I gave it another try by reading the Christmas-related passages from the Bible well before Thanksgiving. Again I struggled with complacency—until I came to this passage: "The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel—'God with us' " (Isaiah 7:14, New Living Translation).

Reading and rereading that verse, I found familiarity giving way to awe. What a miracle: that God would decide to dwell with us. Not as a divine figure but in human form. Not one of high position but the lowliest, a baby, completely dependent on others.

So bring on the familiar Scriptures. Invite me to sing those carols I know so well. This Christmas they remind me that God continues to be Immanuel to me.

I get a glimpse of what that must have cost God in Jesus' parable of the owner of a vineyard, as described in Matthew 21. Like this man, who sent his only son to collect the produce, even after all his other emissaries had been killed, God stopped at nothing to continue contact with human creation. God's ultimate act was to send the son, who gave his own life to keep that contact alive.

I have a growing awe of a God who loves like that. Even more, I am in awe of a God who, despite all the evil we humans can think up, continues to come to us as Immanuel. As Jesus promised before he left, God's Spirit will be present in our lives. This Christmas I will celebrate by identifying the many different ways in which this happens for me.

God comes to me through people. People who question what I do, who probe and prod, painful as that may be. God comes to me through people who affirm and applaud, who compliment me in my work, who tell me they love me just because of who I am. "To love another person is to see the face of God," Jean Valjean sings in the finale of the musical *Les Miserables.* If that be true, I have seen the face of God often this past year.

God also comes to me through circumstances, in the day-to-day rituals that circumscribe my life. I have come to believe that, for the Christian, there is no such thing as coincidence. That is reaffirmed for me when I finish one job only to find another waiting. It is reaffirmed when I email someone with an assignment only to discover that writer has already been musing on the topic I thought I had dreamed up.

But where Immanuel continues to come to me most clearly and most consistently is with my community of believers, the people I worship with Sunday after Sunday. I am amazed at how often God comes through to me in the words, the songs and the prayers of the worship service. For me, each Sunday becomes more than the sum of our individual parts as the Holy Spirit creates something new, exciting and simultaneously comfortable and uncomfortable out of our feeble efforts to praise and worship.

So bring on the familiar Scriptures. Invite me to sing those carols I know so well. This Christmas they remind me that God continues to be Immanuel to me. This is a God who desires my presence and attention. This is a God who continues to be incarnate in my world. My task is to open myself to an awareness of when that happens each day.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to know!" the psalmist sings in 139:6 (NLT). It is this knowledge that takes me from indifference to awe. It is this knowledge, that God dwells in me, that will make this the merriest of all merry Christmases. With plenty left over for a happy new year, new century, new millennium.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

December 14, 1999

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celebrate Advent

10 Diary may shed light on fate of Kratz

11 Seattle Mennonites join WTO protests

12 Amish, pacifists, knights in shining armor

20 Remember the Jesuits, remember God

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Catapulting into discipleship

In the editorial "Six Billion Responsibilities of Child-Dedication Services" (Nov. 16), Rich Preheim reminds us of our responsibilities for each human life. I commend him for pondering the significance of Baby 6B.

Ruth Krall voiced the plight of women and small children at the "Anabaptist Peace and Justice: 2020 Visions Conference" recently held in Goshen, Ind. In materialistic cultures, women and children suffer for lack of such things as adequate health care and quality child care when women who must work often earn minimum wage. In modern warfare, women and children are more likely to be killed than soldiers. Women and girl children are at high risk for rape and torture. The vast majority of refugees in the world today are women, children and the elderly. "Until we do anti-violence work as if women and children mattered, we have not yet begun to be peacemakers," Krall concluded. Her addendum to Preheim's litany of spiritual and physical needs of our 6 billion neighbors catapults us into intentional discipleship.—*Kathryn Aschliman, Goshen, Ind.*

Complex situations, different approaches

I've been surprised to find military people really seeking to follow in obedience to Christ. Those experiences haven't made me less sure about my pacifism and the way of the cross. I believe the military is absolutely contrary to what Jesus teaches. I'm just not able to say military people can't be Christians. How can I say they aren't? Ultimately it's a question I have to leave to God to judge. When we stand before God, we are in far greater danger if we have been too judging and excluding than if we have been too forgiving and accepting.

Does that mean we should discard any standards for membership and open our doors to active military people or practicing homosexuals or divorced and remarried people or business people who are known to cheat their workers or their customers? Not at all, but let's admit these are very complex situations. Recognizing this complexity, perhaps we need to allow for differing approaches as we seek to find a more excellent way.

Quite a few years ago, some churches began accepting divorced and remarried people into membership. Some have allowed active military people into membership. In spite of serious differences about these membership issues, churches with more open policies have remained accepted within the Mennonite Church. Could the same latitude be given to churches choosing to minister to or accept practicing homosexuals? They are trying to be very serious about the Bible's teachings on grace and acceptance, love and forgiveness. We all have a vested interest in exploring and finding the most Christlike response to these difficult human struggles. We may need various responses to find our way through. —*Duane Beachey, San Antonio, Texas*

Failing logic?

Various writers have recently argued that we should think of membership in our churches like we do in our families: We do not disown family members when they do not accept the family's standards, so why do it for church members? (Although they are often vague, I guess the writers are referring to membership, not just welcoming people into worship services, Sunday school classes and fellowship meals; if they mean the latter, of course there is no disagreement.)

The problem is that likening church to family is a false analogy. People are born into families; people come into church by voluntary choice and commitment—choice and commitment to follow Jesus and live the gospel as the church understands Jesus and the gospel. At least that is what Anabaptists' believer's baptism is all about. The family analogy is about as close to the old infant baptism and "corpus christianum" formulas as is any pattern that is tempting us right now. At the very least, if we want to use that analogy, we had better not claim to be Anabaptist. Or we must expect a bad grade in logic.—*Theron F. Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

Grandpa's disappointment

While looking through some old family history materials, I came across the obituary of my grandfather John Blosser, who became a bishop in the Mennonite Church in 1905. He died long before I was born, so I can only wonder about him. This news article tells me that he spent a great deal of time, often at great personal sacrifice, in evangelistic work and was blessed with no small degree of success. He was especially interested in the education and welfare of young people and for a number of years was president of Mennonite Board of Education.

During the last few years of his life and particularly during his last sickness, he was burdened with a message that he felt himself inca-

the **Mennonite**

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readers say

pable of expressing adequately. This was the message of grace. He repeatedly quoted the verse, "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." He often expressed the fear that the Mennonite Church might lose sight of the fact that it cannot save itself or anyone within the circle of its influence by any human-made regulations or decrees, however perfect they might be. To him the gospel of Christ was a message of hope and good cheer.

It seems to me that Grandpa's message is still relevant for us today. I can imagine his deep disappointment in hearing of our determination to diminish the dimensions of God's grace as we tighten the boundaries of our membership. I pray that we will keep our doors open.—*Rosemary Blosser Fry, Goshen, Ind.*

Practical theology

I agree with Robert Bristow-Johnson (Readers Say, Nov. 23) that the integration controversy equates itself to church politics. I live in rural Mississippi, and I can recognize politics. I tend to forget if I am a General Conference Mennonite or an "Old Mennonite," but I do pray daily to be able to walk in the example of Christ. I thank Bristow-Johnson for his words of practical theology.—*Larry Miller, Mashulaville, Miss.*

Proving the point

I would like to thank Alvin Bontrager for branding me as an "enemy" of the church (Readers Say, Nov. 23). He makes my point exactly. He questions why I would even want to be a member of the church. Is a litmus test next? If so, who grades the papers? I was wrong in writing that religious cleansing might begin after the merger. It has already begun. —*Ronald V. Woelk, Hutchinson, Kan.*

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by Marilyn Nolt

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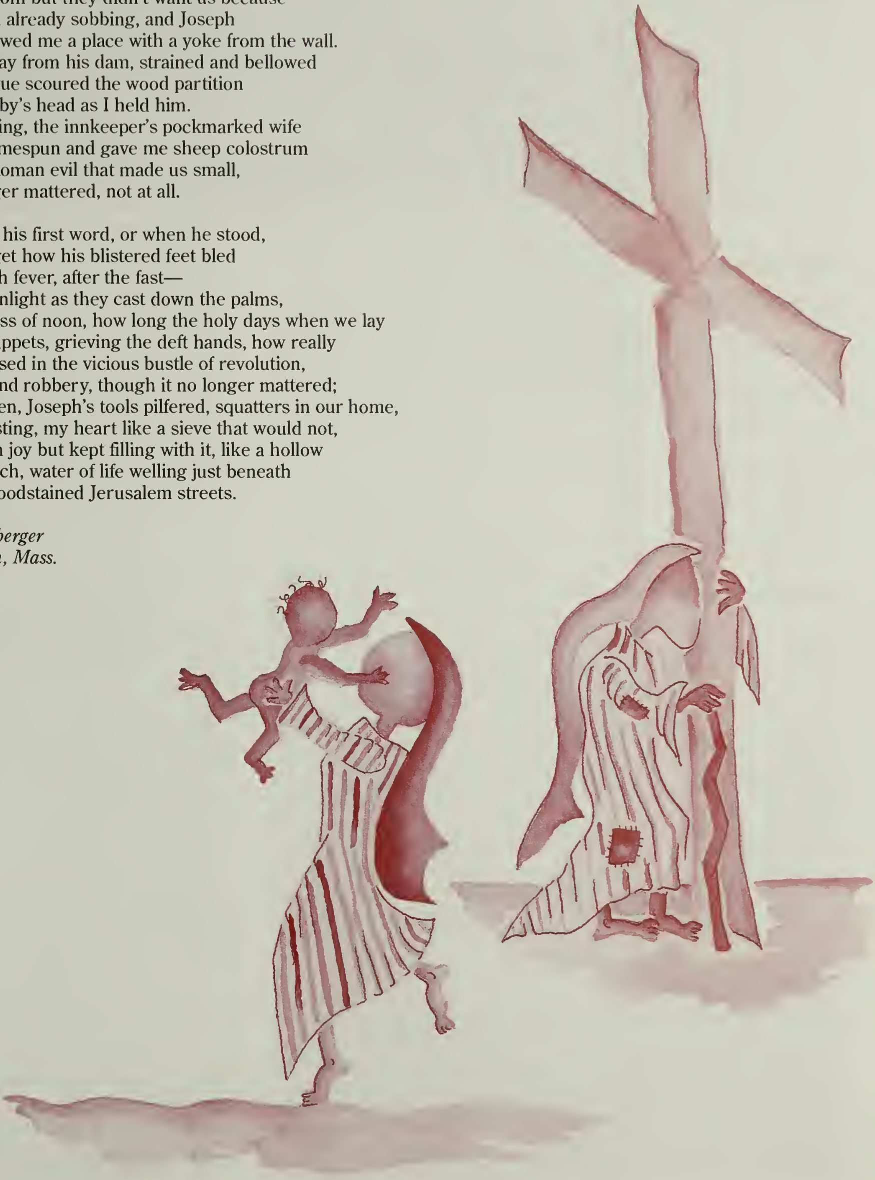
Mary looks back

by Sarah M. Brownsberger

Like any mother, I thought we would remember
All the rest, what no one scribed or hoarded:
How there was room but they didn't want us because
I was unclean and already sobbing, and Joseph
Blustered and plowed me a place with a yoke from the wall.
A calf, penned away from his dam, strained and bellowed
And his long tongue scoured the wood partition
So close to the baby's head as I held him.
How, in the morning, the innkeeper's pockmarked wife
Brought clean homespun and gave me sheep colostrum
And wept at the Roman evil that made us small,
Though it no longer mattered, not at all.

I don't remember his first word, or when he stood,
But that we'd forget how his blistered feet bled
And he shook with fever, after the fast—
How fierce the sunlight as they cast down the palms,
Fierce the darkness of noon, how long the holy days when we lay
Like cast-down puppets, grieving the deft hands, how really
His whole life passed in the vicious bustle of revolution,
Hard times, riot and robbery, though it no longer mattered;
His brothers beaten, Joseph's tools pilfered, squatters in our home,
And I, fed but wasting, my heart like a sieve that would not,
Could not, contain joy but kept filling with it, like a hollow
In sand at the beach, water of life welling just beneath
The rock-hard, bloodstained Jerusalem streets.

Sarah M. Brownsberger
lives in Watertown, Mass.



Ingrid Hess

The wagon whee

and other Advent rituals

by Marie Harnish

The tradition of loving Advent started with a wagon wheel. About six years ago, I was part of the worship committee at First Mennonite Church in Indianapolis when Mag Richer Smith was one of the pastors. She suggested that the theme for that year's Advent celebration begin with a wagon wheel. The ancient custom of taking off wagon wheels, bringing them inside, and festooning them with greens and lights during the winter season symbolized a time to stop and turn inward. That year the worship committee put up a wagon wheel in the sanctuary and decorated it with greenery and ribbons.

I was excited about the prospect of taking off a wheel. I wanted to revitalize the way I celebrated the changing season and the wait for Christmas. I wanted to get away from the commercial ideal of one big day of Santa Claus and gifts. I also had young children and wanted to help them learn about waiting and have a tangible way of sensing the mysteries of God and enjoying all of December.

Adults yearn to understand the mysteries of God, and we thrive on rituals. Children also thrive on rituals and have much to teach us about the wonder of God. *To Dance With God: Family Ritual and Community Celebration* by Gertrud Mueller Nelson has helped me address some of these needs and add them to our family celebrations. She writes about celebrations from the liturgical calendar, starting with Advent. Each Christian celebration is examined from a historical, psychological and spiritual avenue. She presents ideas on how to incorporate celebration into the community, church, family and self. She believes the church needs to encourage interactive participation throughout the liturgical year. When I read her book, I became excited about attending to old rituals and making new ones with my family. I wanted to help my family experience God during Advent with all of our senses.

We begin our celebrations on the first Sunday of Advent. On that day, I bring out the Advent candle wreath. I place a few pine boughs on the wreath to bring in the evergreen smell. I have three purple candles and one pink candle. I place a white candle in the center as a symbol of Christ. On this first Sunday of Advent, each person writes down his or her hopes for the season of Advent and places these in a sealed envelope. (We open these in January, after the holidays are over and usually most of the hopes have taken place.)

Each evening during Advent my family gathers in the darkness around the wreath on the dining room table. Nathan or Hannah, our children, light the tall Advent candle and four small ones on an angel chime. As the heat rises from the flame, the angels spin and ring a bell. After the candles are lit, one person reads a biblical passage listed on the church Advent brochure. Next we sing songs related to Advent or Christmas. We pick one song per week and learn all the verses. Sometimes the children and I play violin along with the songs.

Scripture verse: We also have a small book of Advent devotions for children that invites us to think about what we might have seen if we were to witness the time surrounding Jesus' birth. An example is the word "wood." What would be made out of wood in our house? The book gives several questions and a prayer for children. We also have a small Advent calendar with windows to open each night. A Scripture verse is behind each window.

We have a child-friendly, hanging Advent calendar to help us count the days. There are 24 small angels, gifts and wreaths placed in tiny pockets. Each day one of the children takes the small item and places it on the tree with velcro. This is a wonderful calendar for small fingers. The children place all the figures of the manger scene around the house: the shepherds in a field nearby; the wise kings in different countries; Mary, Joseph and the donkey traveling to Bethlehem. Each night the people move closer to their destination. The baby Jesus arrives Dec. 25.

Nathan and Hannah anticipate Advent as much as I do. They especially like the chocolates. Each night of Advent we open a window on a German Advent calendar and find the chocolate behind it. We only have one of these, so from the time they were small they have had to share the treasured chocolate.

Last year we used the MCC penny calendar during the Advent season. We changed some of the giving reasons on the calendar to fit our family. For example, give one penny for every slice of bread you ate today or give two pennies for each inch around your waist. The children wanted to raise the highest amount (over $1,000) so we enlisted our immediate relatives. Every few days I emailed the cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles with how many pennies to give. We saw our collection grow and heard how the relatives helped. Later we delivered the money directly to MCC in Akron, Pa.

As our evening gathering time comes to a close, we spend a few moments in silence,

> Adults yearn to understand the mysteries of God, and we thrive on rituals. Children also thrive on rituals and have much to teach us about the wonder of God.

Resources for Advent

- *Before and After Christmas* by Debbie Trafton O'Neal (Augsburg, 1991)
- *Unplug the Christmas Machine* by Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli (Morrow, 1991)
- *To Dance With God: Family Ritual and Community Celebration* by Gertrud Mueller Nelson (Paulist Press, 1986)
- Creative Communications for the Parish, Inc., 10300 Watson Road, St. Louis, MO 63127, a source of Advent card calendars and Advent chains and an Advent guide for children

Marie Harnish

Nathan, Hannah and Luke Harnish Geiser (left to right) with an Advent wreath and Swedish chimes, part of their family's annual Advent celebration. Also in the background are several Nativity scenes from the family's extensive collection from around the world.

enjoying the quiet. We can hear the hiss of flame and the angel chimes. A different person says the closing prayer each night. The entire ritual takes only 10 to 15 minutes.

One continuous celebration during Advent is listening to our favorite Christmas CDs. I enjoy Handel's *Messiah*, the Vienna Boys Choir and the Indianapolis Children's Choir, among others. We also make manger scenes out of clay. For the last four years each family member has made a manger scene or added to a previous one. We contemplate the various feelings, shapes and sizes of the people involved at the birth of Jesus. For the children it is a tactile way of participating in the waiting.

St. Nicholas: Dec. 6 is a special day when we celebrate St. Nicholas Day. *To Dance With God* explains how Nicholas evolved into Santa Claus. On Dec. 5, Ned, my husband, and I make delicious Speculatius cookies (see recipe at right) after the children are in bed. That night, each person puts out shoes. In the morning, Dec. 6, each pair of shoes is filled with a gingerbread cookie, a small chocolate, an orange and a small ornament symbolizing an event or special time of the past year. St. Nicholas was a secret giver to those in need, and the orange symbolizes gold balls he gave to three poor women.

We encourage little St. Nicholases to give special gifts or deeds to others without the other person finding out who it is. We set up a simple wooden manger with a pile of straw beside it. Each week we draw names, and whoever's name you get is the recipient of your secret gifts that week. Each time you do something nice for the other person you put a straw in the manger. We enjoy building up good deeds as we get closer to Christmas.

Advent is a time of waiting and a time for celebrating. When I ask Nathan and Hannah what they like about the upcoming holidays, they always say Advent. As I see the candlelight reflected in their eyes and the wonder of it all being expressed by their voices, I know the traditions we follow now help them integrate their daily lives with God's mysteries.

This Advent season we anticipate the special seasonal smells of candles, pine boughs and cinnamon. We relish the delicious tastes of chocolate and eggnog. We prepare our hands to touch clay and straw. We listen for the familiar hymns and angels chiming. We wait for the light and feeling of warmth from candles. We enjoy being a family, coming closer together as we take off a wheel and experience God with all our senses.

Marie Harnish is a member of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis. This article is reprinted with permission from MennoExpressions, *the newsletter of First Mennonite Church.*

Recipe for Speculatius cookies

Mix in order:

1 c. shortening	4 t. cinnamon
2 c. white sugar	2 t. allspice
4 eggs whole	2 t. nutmeg
3/4 t. salt	2 t. ginger
2 t. baking powder	2 t. cloves
4 c. flour	

Turn out onto a floured board. Knead in about one cup additional flour or as much as you need until dough is no longer sticky and is easy to handle.

Put into a plastic bag and refrigerate until chilled and stiff. Then you are ready to roll out and cut the cookies. Cut off a manageable piece and keep the rest cool until you are ready for more.

For many little cut-out shapes, roll out the dough thinly. Thin cookies are tastiest.

For the larger, decorated St. Nicholas cookies, roll the dough to about ¼-inch thickness. Cut out cookie around paper pattern. Place on greased baking sheet. Then get inspired. Use scrappy bits of dough to decorate your Nicholas. For a beard press a little dough through a sieve or a garlic press. Use little balls of dough for eyes or buttons.

The same dough lends itself to all sorts of shapes and symbols and is useful for making "St. Nicholas awards" to certain people on this special occasion.

Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown. These keep forever in tins in the freezer or for two to three weeks on the shelf.—*Marie Harnish*

Elizabeth Catlett (UNICEF)

Advent reflections

Christma
in Burkina Faso

There were no great feasts and no gift exchanges. Still, like the shepherds 2,000 years ago, we had praised and glorified God for the gift of hope.

Sometimes, as we become involved in our jobs, roles and passions, we expect, in some way, to bring God into situations. But we often find God in unexpected places, working in unexpected ways.

God is with u

by Lois Coleman Neufeld

Lois Coleman Neufeld

The angel's message to Joseph holds the essence of the Christmas season: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him 'Immanuel'—which means, 'God with us' " (Matthew 1:23 NIV).

When we celebrate Christmas, we are celebrating "God with us." This truth gives special meaning, not only to a time of year commercialized beyond recognition but to the lives of Christians around the world, throughout the year.

In Africa, "God with us" is evident in the lives of many partners and friends. A pastor who works with widows and orphans finds encouragement as he struggles against laws and traditions that oppress and abuse those in mourning. The knowledge of "God with us" gives him strength to stand up against those who are stronger and more powerful. It also gives him energy to pass on the news of God's presence to those who feel lost and hopeless. He lives, breathes, preaches and encourages because the message of Christmas is "God with us."

An African development worker has experienced "God with us" in the midst of war and has found courage. On a trip from his home village to the capital city, the bus in which this young man and his sick uncle were traveling was stopped by rebels. Everybody was ordered out of the bus. Personal belongings were confiscated and young people conscripted into the army. The rebels allowed this man to continue to the hospital with his uncle. When he arrived in the city, news of his father's murder reached him, along with the message that his family expected him to seek revenge. This young man, having known God's presence in the midst of danger, gained courage. He refused to avenge his father's death and instead found the inner peace to share news of "God with us" to those who were angry and hurt.

Sometimes, as we become involved in our jobs, roles and passions, we expect, in some way, to bring God into situations. But we often find God in unexpected places, working in unexpected ways. During these times, "God with us" is humbling. We enter a new village or a new situation and discover God already there. That is the good news of Christmas. God is with all of us—all around the world.

Lois Coleman Neufeld is a member of Highland (Mennonite Brethren) Church in Calgary and is affiliated with West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship in Philadelphia. She serves with Mennonite Central Committee in Zambia.

Eve

by Rob White

We crowded into the small church of an outlying village for "la veille" (the watch), the Christmas Eve celebration. Those who were lucky got to sit on a bench. The rest, along with a mass of children, sat cross-legged on the bare cement floor or spilled out of the doorway. A lone fluorescent bulb, generously loaned by a congregation member for the occasion, flickered on the wall behind the modest pulpit. The buzz of the generator, rented courtesy of a special collection, could be heard outside.

At the signal of a director, songs of celebration drowned out the buzz of the generator. Clapping filled the air, beats of tam-tams resounded off the church's tin roof and the sound of singing burst forth from the building into the night, like a loudspeaker announcing the birth of Christ. Song followed joyous song, until the women, showing off their new dresses and intricately woven hair, came forward to dance, once again to the encouragement of tam-tams.

All then grew calm as people listened to the pastor's Christmas message, then enjoyed a treat of bread and coffee. Skits followed, to the sheer delight of the children who couldn't contain themselves at the antics of the youth imitating villagers. Laughing continued late into the night, until everyone grew faint with sleep. The end of the celebration was marked by prayers of thanksgiving and with the pops of a handful of firecrackers.

As I walked home in the night I was struck by how little it had seemed like Christmas. No snow, Christmas lights, Christmas tree, Santa Claus, candy canes or parade floats marked the day. There were no great feasts and no gift exchanges. Still, like the shepherds 2,000 years ago, we had praised and glorified God for the gift of hope. "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21 NIV).

Rob White

Rob White is from Sarnia, Ont., where he is a member of Grace United Church. He serves with Mennonite Central Committee in Burkina Faso.

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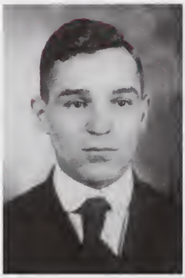
80 years after his disappearance, diary discovery may shed light on fate of MCCer Clayton Kratz



Clayton Kratz, circa 1920

> I've always felt that in the system somewhere would be something about Kratz.
>
> *—Paul Toews*

Investigators into one of 20th-century Mennonitism's greatest mysteries—the 1920 disappearance of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) martyr Clayton Kratz in the Ukraine—now have new clues that he was shot by his Communist captors. That information was recently uncovered in an archived diary of an American Mennonite church worker.

Kratz, Orie Miller and Arthur Slagel, the first workers with the fledgling MCC, arrived in Russia in September 1920 to begin relief efforts in the wake of mass starvation due to years of war and civil unrest. Kratz, a member of Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church and Goshen (Ind.) College student, was working in the Mennonite colony of Molotschna when the Red Army started advancing on southern Ukraine. He was set to leave the village of Halbstadt for the safety of the Crimea on Oct. 29.

But the night before his planned departure, the village fell into the army's hands and Kratz was arrested. Thanks to the efforts of local Mennonites, he was soon released. But he was arrested again about two weeks later and was last seen in the village of Fuerstenwerder, also in Molotschna. He was 24 at the time.

"The report was that he had been somewhat brutally treated and [was] going away on a wagon," says John Ruth, a Harleysville, Pa., historian and Kratz expert.

Since then, efforts to determine Kratz's whereabouts or fate, including investigations by MCC in 1921 and 1922, have been largely fruitless. Some reports proposed that his life was spared because he was an American but that he died of disease in Russia or that he was banished to Siberia or a concentration camp.

Then this past summer, Ruth Unrau, a volunteer at the Mennonite Library and Archives (MLA) in North Newton, Kan., was transcribing a diary of C.E. Krehbiel, a longtime General Conference Mennonite Church leader who served as a relief worker in Russia in 1922-23. Unrau discovered reports of Krehbiel's inquiries into Kratz's disappearance—information that had previously been unknown to contemporary researchers.

Among the diary's Kratz-related contents, published this fall in an MLA newsletter, was a Dec. 24, 1922, reference to a document numbered 3853A in Kharkov, then the Ukrainian capital, that said Kratz had been accused of being a spy and was shot in Alexandrowsk, now the Ukrainian city of Zaporozhzhia. Krehbiel did not see the document but had it reported to him by a Johann Wall, who found out about it from "a Jew he knows from Lodz."

John Ruth calls the discovery of the document number "just plain amazing," and it gives some direction to researchers such as Paul Toews, director of the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Fresno, Calif. Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, Toews has made a number of trips to the former Soviet Union to research Mennonite-related holdings in archives and libraries there. He hopes to pursue this latest development during a previously planned trip to the Ukraine next summer.

Toews has been wanting to study the files in Kharkow and Zaporozhzhia, but now he says the findings in Krehbiel's diary make those visits increasingly important. "To my knowledge, no Mennonite historian has been to Kharkov to investigate what's there," he says.

Toews points out that there are no guarantees that he will find anything or where he will find it. In addition to Kharkov, Toews says he may also have to search in Kiev, which succeeded Kharkov as the Ukrainian capital, and in Moscow. There is also the possibility that the document number from Krehbiel's diary may not correspond to any current files.

But Toews, whose father, J.B., met Kratz in Halbstadt as a teenager, says the Soviets kept meticulous records. "I've always felt that in the system somewhere would be something about Kratz," he says.

Krehbiel's diary also names Kratz's possible killer, a Grigori Saposhnikov, as identified by a Mrs. Dyck, whom Krehbiel met. "[Saposhnikov] has lived in her house for 11 months and wants to go to the U.S. … He is supposed to be a bad man in general," Krehbiel wrote on Aug. 15, 1922. "[Dyck] says he says that he has already had revenge on the U.S. for not letting him come in and she interprets that to mean that he fixed [Kratz]."

With more light now shed on Kratz's disappearance, another mystery is why Krehbiel's findings had been unknown for so long. "You would think he would have reported the information to somebody once he got back," says MLA archivist John Thiesen. "If he did, then somehow those details got lost."—*Rich Preheim*

WTO events mean business not as usual

Seattle MVS unit, congregation drawn into protests

SEATTLE—For Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) worker Dan Erb and staff at the Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC), demonstrations during the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle created a situation as sticky as peanut butter and jelly.

Thousands of protesters coupled with a 7 p.m.-to-7 a.m. curfew kept food from arriving at DESC, a homeless shelter where Erb serves.

"DESC gets its food brought in for the evening meal, and the first night they couldn't get through, so we spent an hour making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches," says Erb, from Lancaster, Pa.

The Nov. 30-Dec. 3 world trade meetings attracted as many of 50,000 protesters from outside the city and drew in the Seattle MVS unit and Seattle Mennonite Church. Unit and congregational members took part in various activities. Participants said most of the demonstrators were committed to peaceful activities.

"Don't believe everything you see or hear on the news," says Seattle Mennonite Church pastor Weldon Nisly. "We have been giving public voice and nonviolent witness to fair trade ... such as Ten Thousand Villages and Jubilee 2000. Yet a handful of demonstrators acted with violence, and the police have overreacted with greater violence. ... We are trying to be a sane voice and a peaceful presence in a volatile situation."

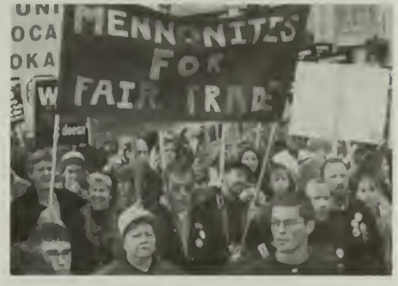
As the police attempted to clear the downtown area, they pushed protesters into the Capitol Hills section of the city, where the MVS unit house is located. "You could hear the gas grenades going off and get whiffs of pepper spray at the unit," says Cole Hull, local MVS program coordinator.

The MVS unit hosted a group of students from San Francisco who had come to participate in the demonstrations. As many as 20 people spent one or more nights in the house.

"All downtown hotel rooms were snapped up by trade delegations and government officials," Hull says. "So a plea went out for people to host students and representatives from [nongovernmental organizations]. We heard about it through Seattle Mennonite Church."

Hull and congregational members took part in a Dec. 1 labor march, and Erb attended an interfaith rally in support of the Jubilee 2000 campaign that calls for forgiveness of Third World debt.

Erb wishes he could have participated in some other WTO-related protest activities. But, he says, "I needed to go to work. If I didn't show up, other people would suffer for it."



David E. Ortman

Members of Seattle Mennonite Church join in a protest march during the World Trade Organization's meetings in the city Nov. 30-Dec. 3.

While Erb and two other unit members, Ben Lehman of Orrville, Ohio, and Tara Swartzendruber from Goshen, Ind., work downtown, they were never prevented from getting to their jobs. "We might have had to walk farther because of some streets being blocked off," Erb says.

"It was surreal to walk down the streets I walk every day to work and see the groups of [protesters], burning garbage, and police in riot gear."

In several resolutions passed by the congregation, Seattle Mennonite Church outlined concerns about WTO. "We are concerned that WTO goals of eliminating trade barriers and increased economic production and growth worldwide are being attempted without adequate safeguards for persons and creation," one resolution read. The congregation also adopted a resolution in support of Jubilee 2000.
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

Don't believe everything you see or hear on the news.
—Weldon Nisly

Church encouraged by failed divestiture vote

SEATTLE—A resolution from Seattle Mennonite Church for the College Retirement Equities Fund to divest itself of its stock in the controversial Freeport McMoRan mining company failed with a 17 percent vote at CREF's annual meeting last month. But congregational members are heartened by the support the resolution received. David E. Ortman wrote in the congregational newsletter that a 10 percent vote is considered a major victory for a first-time resolution.

By receiving more than 3 percent of the vote, the resolution can be refiled, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Freeport McMoRan has been accused of human rights and environmental abuses in connection with its operation in Indonesia, where it runs the world's largest copper mine. Seattle Mennonite Church owns donated Freeport McMoRan stock and has been campaigning against questionable company activities.

Amish, pacifists, knights in shining armor

U.S. awareness of Mennonites up but confusion remains

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Mennonites are becoming increasingly urbanized, a recent national survey indicates. But at the same time, they are still often confused with their religious cousins, the Amish.

The study regarding awareness of Mennonites was coordinated by Mennonite Board of Missions Mennonite Media staff in conjunction with staff of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. The telephone survey of 1,016 adults (507 men and 509 women) in the United States was conducted by Caravan Opinion Research Corporation International during the first week of February 1999.

Seventy-one percent of respondents said they had heard of Mennonites, a small increase over a previous study conducted in 1989, when 64 percent reported being aware of the Mennonite Church. The number of respondents who said they knew nothing about Mennonites dropped from 36 percent in 1989 to 29 percent this year.

The greatest increase of awareness came among African-Americans. In 1989, 24 percent said they had heard the name and knew something about Mennonites, compared with 38 percent in 1999.

"This is a fairly hefty increase," says Galen Lehman, psychology professor at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, who evaluated the research. "If African-Americans come more from urban areas, you could infer that the church is becoming more urbanized."

Lehman also notes that awareness of Mennonites in metro areas is almost as high as in rural areas, something that probably wasn't true 50 years ago. According to the 1999 survey, 69 percent of respondents in metropolitan areas had some awareness of Mennonites, compared with 75 percent in nonmetropolitan areas.

But many respondents demonstrated confusion about Mennonites. When asked, "What things come to mind when I mention Mennonites?" 39 percent responded with references such as Amish, people who keep to themselves, beards for men, prayer coverings for women and no modern conveniences.

Gerald Biesecker-Mast, communication professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College, who does research in the area of Anabaptists and Mennonites, cautioned against interpreting these findings as a need to distance the church from the Amish. "If people in North America seem to be searching for what they perceive the Amish to offer, and if there is continuing association in the minds of people, why fight it?" he says. "Why not stress that many Mennonites today choose other ways to be nonconformed to the world?"

Smaller percentages of respondents identified the Mennonite faith with descriptions other than Amish, including: simple religion, 3 percent; Christian, 2 percent; service and disaster responses, 1 percent; and peace and nonresistance, 1 percent. One percent said Mennonites are members of a religious cult.

Eighteen respondents said Mennonites are mentioned in the Bible, and 13 said the name referred to a male-dominated church or an organization of men. Seven thought Mennonites have something to do with a night church service or "men who go to church at night." Four speculated that perhaps Mennonites were knights in shining armor.

To compare awareness of Mennonites with other denominations, 98 percent of respondents in the survey said they were aware of Baptists, 94 percent were aware of Lutherans, and 77 percent were aware of Nazarenes, and only 28 percent were aware of the Church of the Brethren.

"The question that this study raises in my mind is, Is it important for Mennonites to have brand-name identity, or are the values they hold more effectively inserted into the public debate detached from Mennonite identity?" says Burton Buller, Mennonite Media's new media director. "The important thing is that society practices justice and mercy rather than making sure 98 percent of the population accurately divines the nuances of Mennonite subcategories."
—Melodie M. Davis for MBM News Service

Mennonite awareness—a 10-year comparison

Know nothing about Mennonites	Heard, know something about Mennonites	Heard name only	Combined awareness
1989 **36%** 1999 **29%**	1989 **24%** 1999 **29%**	1989 **40%** 1999 **42%**	1989 **64%** 1999 **71%**

Bluffton *Messiah* honors late director

The 104th performance of *Messiah* by the Bluffton (Ohio) Choral Society on Dec. 12 was dedicated to a longtime Bluffton College faculty member.

James Bixel, who died earlier this year, directed the annual *Messiah* performances from 1961 to 1973 and in 1982. Bixel taught music at Bluffton from 1960 to 1987.

"Those of us who sang under his direction still benefit from his expertise, his energy and his contagious excitement for music," says Stephen Jacoby, Bluffton music professor and director of this year's performance.

Bixel, a 1935 Bluffton graduate, was a prolific composer whose works included *Dance of the Kobzar, The Parables* and *The Road to Emmaus.*

Observances of MCC's 50 years in Palestine prompt reminiscing, praise for fostering shalom

JERUSALEM, West Bank—In a land known for its violence and injustice, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) was praised last month for fostering shalom in Palestine for the past half century.

"What makes the Mennonites special is that they never came here to add a church where there are already so many," said Sulieman Noor, headmaster of Hope Secondary School in Beit Jala. "They helped in education, agriculture and material aid. I believe that is the true church—not built of rocks and stones but of living stones."

Noor's comments came at one of two receptions commemorating MCC's 50 years of work in the Holy Land. MCC's presence began in Jericho, where there was a large number of Palestinian refugees displaced by Israel's war of independence. Meeting the needs of these homeless, jobless refugees was the focus of MCC's work into the early 1960s.

Zoughbi Zoughbi, director of Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center in Bethlehem, expressed thanks for the support MCC gives Palestinians as they struggle for justice under the Israeli occupation. "Individuals can resist injustice, but it takes a community to make justice," he said.

Justice is still needed in the Holy Land, participants learned on a 10-day tour organized as part of the 50th anniversary observance. The Bethlehem Bible College was invited to sing at one celebration, but Israeli authorities at the last minute refused to grant them travel permits.

In the Palestinian village of Marda, tour participants heard the anguish of farmers who lost thousands of olive trees to the enormous Jewish settlement of Ariel, built on their fields in the hills above Marda without their permission. In Anata, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, the group visited the Shawamreh family, Palestinians whose home has twice been demolished by Israeli authorities over the past year. With the help of sympathetic Israelis appalled by their government's actions, the family has managed to rebuild.

The anniversary celebrations provided opportunity for former MCC workers to visit old sites and renew old relationships.

"Oh, it's you! I didn't recognize you," exclaimed Helen Stork as she hugged Faya Qawasmy, whose father was a gardener whom the MCC workers knew. Stork, now living in Ventura, Calif., served in Jordan from 1968 to 1970.

MCC photo by Rick J. Fast

Phyllis Lind of Salem, Ore., and Faya Qawasmy of Jericho hug each other for the first time in 36 years. Lind, a former Mennonite Central Committee worker in Jericho, last month was on a tour to the Holy Land as part of MCC's celebration of 50 years in Palestine. Qawasmy's family had been known by the MCC workers in Jericho.

Irvin Voth of Newton, Kan., came to Jericho in 1954 to distribute material aid. He remembers when MCC's warehouse and house were looted and some vehicles burned in 1955. The Western powers had pressured Jordan into accepting a pro-Western Turkish-Iraqi pact, and MCC became the target of a mob in Jericho angry about the agreement. They attacked the MCC house, which had two women inside. "We saw the mobs of people and the Jordanian army trying to disperse them," recalled Voth.

The two women locked themselves in the bathroom, and two Palestinians who worked with MCC guarded the door, refusing to let the looters into the room. The two women were eventually rescued, and the Jericho MCC team left town.

"After a week we came back," Voth said. "People apologized for what had happened and said they thought the Mennonites would never come back. People helped clean up the house and rebuild."

The tour also visited MCC-supported projects, such as a frozen-vegetable processing plant in Gaza, which employs 45 women and provides frozen produce to 90 supermarkets in the region. MCC helped buy the operation's freezer.

In addition to the receptions and tour, MCC also released a book, *Salt and Sign: Mennonite Central Committee in Palestine, 1949-1999*, by Sonia and Alain Epp Weaver, current MCC workers in the Holy Land.—*MCC News Service*

MCC marks 20 years of work in Cambodia

In 1979, Cambodia was emerging from four years of holocaust under Pol Pot. Some 2 million of the country's 9 million people died. The survivors had memories and nightmares, little food and a ruined economy.

In came Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and nine other agencies with food and other provisions.

"You came and helped when we had nothing, only our bare hands," Cambodian Premier Hun Set told representatives of the 10 agencies on Nov. 18 in the capital city of Phnom Penh. The gathering marked the 20th anniversary of work in Cambodia.

In the 1980s, MCC was prohibited by the U.S. State Department from sending school kits to Cambodia. It became an embarrassing public relations problem for the government, and permission was eventually granted.

Chou Sokom, now a journalist, recalls receiving a school kit 18 years ago. As a high school student, he had no paper, pencil or notebook.—*MCC News Service*

For Indonesian, from chaos to community

Rahino

AKRON, Pa.—As Indonesian Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Abang Rahino watched the evening news on May 18, 1998, he grew increasingly worried. It seemed clear that the 32-year rule of President Suharto was coming to an end, and chaos could result. Rahino feared anyone who looked Western could be targeted by rioters.

"Indonesians know that in the past Washington was very involved in Indonesian politics," Rahino says.

He jumped on his motor scooter and roared across the quiet capital city of Jakarta to the house of Clair and Faye Brenneman, MCC's country representatives. By early the next morning, Rahino was shepherding them through the airport and to a plane bound for a safer island. Later that day he also helped other MCC workers relocate.

Most of Rahino's days are now less dramatic than those turbulent times. He works in MCC's Jakarta office, helping administer programs and working with government officials to obtain visas and permissions.

Rahino began attending a Mennonite congregation as a 17-year-old studying woodcarving in Jepara, Central Java, in the heart of what some have called the "Lancaster County of Indonesia" for its high concentration of Mennonites.

To improve his English, Rahino began reading his pastor's copy of *Mennonite Weekly Review*. Rahino thus learned about the broader Mennonite world and about Mennonites' concerns for needs of those around them. "I was drawn by the warm hospitality of the Mennonite church," he says.

Rahino worked 11 years for a small Mennonite publishing house in Central Java. He began to work for MCC in 1996.

Rahino is concerned about growing individualism in Indonesian society, which can lead to injustice. When MCC invited him to attend the agency's orientation sessions for new workers last month, he visited several intentional communities. "I wanted to learn how that kind of community can be established and developed," he says.—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

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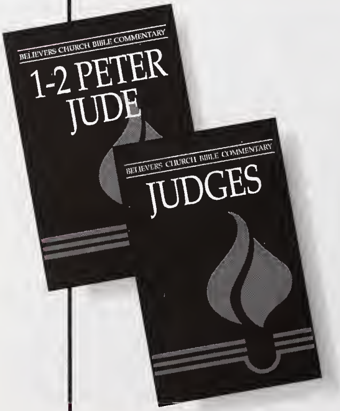
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Work among California's Japanese gets grant

ELKHART, Ind.—In preparation to go to Japan with the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mike Sherrill is working on his doctorate in evangelism at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. But that doesn't mean he isn't reaching Japanese people now.

Sherrill and his wife, Teresa, are working to establish a Japanese cell church at Pasadena Mennonite Church or a separate Japanese Mennonite congregation. Through a ministry called Funky Friday, the Sherrills have already led more than 30 Japanese-speaking people to Christ. The weekly gatherings draw more than 100 people.

The Sherrills' work has received a $5,000 grant from Mennonite Board of Missions' Evangelism and Church Development department.—*MBM News Service*

Goshen program draws international attention

SARASOTA, Fla.—To learn about issues related to older adults, a group of Japanese visitors went to school. The nine-member delegation on Nov. 17 visited Goshen (Ind.) College's LEAF, or Learning Enjoyment After Fifty-five, program in Sarasota.

Goshen began LEAF in March, attracting more than 70 charter members and additional students. Members decide the program's courses and activities.

Tour organizer Jio Tomizawa said the group wanted to "study the issues associated with aging population and to examine the social and institutional systems that serve and support older adults." The visitors, who also toured Boston and New York, chose the LEAF program because of its emphasis on service and community.

MCC contributions up 60 percent in Canada

WINNIPEG—Cash contributions from Canadians for the work of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) have increased by 60 percent in the past five years, reaching nearly $11.5 million (U.S.) in the 1998-99 fiscal year.

The funds come from general donations, giving to designated projects, relief sales, thrift sales and cash donations to MCC's food account with Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The biggest increase this year came in designated giving, up to $4.4 million from $1.9 million the year before. Much of it was for emergency relief for Kosovo and for Latin America after Hurricane Mitch.

"It shows we've enjoyed strong support at a time when many people predicted charities would decrease," says MCC Canada executive director Marv Frey. "We seem to have bucked the trend."—*MCC Canada News Service*

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by the way ...

During the past 12 months in the Meserete Kristos Church (the Mennonite church in Ethiopia), the number of worshipers has increased by 18,000, to 151,000 in 231 congregations and 588 church plants.—*Meserete Kristos College Newsletter*

Dale D. Gehman

In concert

Glenn Lehman, director of the Table Singers, leads the choir and audience in "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" during a Nov. 27 concert in Lancaster, Pa. The Table Singers were organized 12 years ago to inspire congregational singing and appreciation of hymns. The concert, held at Lancaster Mennonite High School, drew an estimated 750 people.

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Workers

Cutter, Stephen, was installed Dec. 5 as pastor of Grace Mennonite Church, Enid. Okla.

Harms, Dawn Yoder, was ordained Sept. 19 as pastor at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hostetler, Darrel and Sherrill, on Sept. 30 concluded pastorates at Mount Vernon Mennonite Church, Grottoes, Va.

Landis, Liz, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Ephrata, Pa., as assistant manager of public relations for a Ten Thousand Villages store.

Martin, Lee, on Nov. 30 concluded a pastorate at Gospel Hill Mennonite Church, Bridgewater, Va.

McFarren, Patrick, was installed Oct. 31 as pastor of Asheville (N.C.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, Ernest "Butch," on Sept. 12 concluded a pastorate at Crest Hill Mennonite Church, Wardensville, W.Va.

Miller, Terry, was licensed Oct. 10 as pastor of Stuarts Draft (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Penner, Stephen, was licensed Oct. 31 as pastor at First Mennonite Church, Reedley, Calif.

Schloneger, Bob and Enid, were installed Nov. 7 as pastors of Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Stucky, Luzdy, Tucson, Ariz., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Tucson as a peace and justice educator.

Waite, Phil, was installed and licensed Oct. 3 as pastor of Oak Park (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Wenger, Timm, Lancaster, Pa., began Dec. 1 as director of communications at Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa.

Births

Amstutz, Luke Benjamin, Sept. 29, to Eugene and Jina Amstutz, Orrville, Ohio.

Baumeister-Peters, Calvin Jacob, Oct. 11, to Beth and P. J. Baumeister-Peters, Pasadena, Calif.

Beck, Asha Landes, Nov. 22, to Eric and Susan (Landes) Beck, Elkhart, Ind.

Brown, Zoe Rose MacKenzie, Nov. 3, to Dale and Melanie (Burkholder) Brown, Edmonton.

Buckwalter, Katherine Leah, Oct. 28, to Gregg and Wendy (Harkcom) Buckwalter, Greencastle, Pa.

Dise, Joseph Samuel, Oct. 22, to Ronald and Rowena (Overholt) Dise, Perkasie, Pa.

Eichelberger, Noah John, Sept. 28, to Lorie (Schmidt) and Lynn Eichelberger, Pomona, Kan.

Espinosa, Christian, Oct. 23, to Enrique and Melissa (Baez) Espinosa, San Juan, Texas.

Finley, Cole William, Nov. 4, to Heather (Falke) and Kevin Finley, Halstead, Kan.

Fisher, Joshua Jae, Nov. 9, to Brinda (DeLeon) and Mark Fisher, LaJunta, Colo.

Geiser, Jared Allen, Nov. 17, to Bobbi and Steve Geiser, Wooster, Ohio.

Gottschalk, Brock Dean, Nov. 16, to Holly (Nafziger) and Tim Gottschalk, Armington, Ill.

Imchen, Yimsübenla Grace, Nov. 4, to Beth (Rice) and Ramoktoshi Imchen, Chambersburg, Pa.

King, Meredith Grace, Nov. 28, to Erika (Musselman) and Kirby King, Souderton, Pa.

Lytle, Adam Carlyle and Cole Walter (twins), Nov. 18, to Brenda (Nice) and Brian Lytle, Newport News, Va.

Martin, Jocelyn Amber, Sept. 22, to Bonnie (Martin) and Randy Martin, Elmira, Ont.

Mast, Jared Gregory, Nov. 11, to Dawn (Culbertson) and Mark Mast, Reading, Pa.

Miller, Jesse David, Oct. 26, to DeAnn (Jantz) and Todd Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Simon Allen Graber, Nov. 5, to Ann and Keith Graber Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Sydney Jewel, Sept. 21, to Cher (Weaver) and Stacey Miller, Wooster, Ohio.

Myers, Brittany Ann, Sept. 23, to Loren and Nancy (Detweiler) Myers, Perkasie, Pa.

Nafziger, Melissa Sue, Sept. 21, to Eric and Susan Nafziger, Parkesburg, Pa.

Regier, Richard Lloyd, Nov. 9, to Joseph and Karla (Lloyd) Regier, Newton, Kan.

Rice, Kimberly Anna, Oct. 10, to Philip and Renee (Alderfer) Rice, Perkasie, Pa.

Rice, Matthew Allebach, Sept. 17, to Brenda (Allebach) and Daryl Rice, Perkasie, Pa.

Schrock, Benjamin Joel, Oct. 4, to Cletus and Rachel (Martin) Schrock, Goshen, Ind.

Shelly, Allison Janae, Oct. 27, to Lisa (Zendt) and Paul Shelly, Tupelo, Miss.

Slabaugh, Annika Morgan, Oct. 6, to Beth (Gingerich) and Shannon Slabaugh, Arthur, Ill.

Uttley, Maxwell Blake, Sept. 10, to Christa (Davidson) and Richard Uttley, Elmira, Ont.

Yoder, Austin Gotwals, June 26, 1999, received for adoption Oct. 14, by Joanie (Gotwals) and Terry Yoder, Leola, Pa.

Marriages

Faulkner/Funk: Polly Ann Faulkner, Hillsboro, Kan., and Brian Roy Funk, Hillsboro, Oct. 2 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Gerber/Gouldey: Kalyn Gerber, Souderton, Pa., and Michael Gouldey, Elroy, Pa., Nov. 20 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Litwiller/McKinley: Rodney Litwiller, Hopedale, Ill., and Diane McKinley, Morton, Ill., Nov. 27 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Riesen/Stean: Elda Marie Riesen, Hillsboro, Kan., and Adney Cornilus Stean, Hillsboro, Nov. 13 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Deaths

Crilow, Homer Daniel, 90, Berlin, Ohio, died Nov. 19. Spouse: Bernice Mae Miller Crilow (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Schnell Crilow (deceased). Survivors: children Wayne, Irene Hill; two grandchildren; two stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 23 at Millersburg, Ohio.

Dubrick, Kenneth, 81, Kitchener, Ont., died Nov. 10. Spouse: Pearl Kufske Dubrick. Parents: John and Mary Dubrick (deceased). Other survivors: children Ron, Marilyn Bleach, Carl; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Funk, Agathe Katherine Froese, 91, Inola, Okla., died Nov. 10. Spouse: Waldo Funk (deceased). Parents: Henry Jr. and Agathe Janzen Froese (deceased). Survivors: children Joann Funk Unruh, Janice Funk Jantz; three grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Gingerich, Ruth Fretz, 78, Elmira, Ont., died Nov. 20. Parents: Joseph and Martha Reesor Fretz (deceased). Memorial service: Nov. 23 at Vineland, Ont.

Good, Lloyd, 88, Sterling, Ill., died Sept. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Lois Good. Parents: Daniel and Mary Good (deceased). Other survivors: children Lois, Joyce. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Halteman, Kenneth, 50, Palmer, Pa., died Nov. 24 in a truck accident. Spouse: Linda Devine. Parents: LeRoy (deceased) and Elizabeth Freed Halteman. Other survivors: children James, Terry, Sharon Detwiler, Christina Kincade; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 29 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Kreider, Ethel McWethy, 84, Sterling, Ill., died Oct. 29. Spouse: Charles Kreider. Parents: Tom and Edith McWethy (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Charles; seven grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Leatherman, Duane, 41, Lancaster, Pa., died Nov. 8. Spouse: Nancy Kuhns Leatherman. Parents: David and Julia Steiner Leatherman. Other survivors: children Beth, Brian. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Hosanna Christian Fellowship, Lititz, Pa.

Mosemann, Dorothy Garber, 94, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 14. Spouse: Roy Moseman (deceased). Parents: Amos and Lizzie Reist Garber (deceased). Survivors: daughter Rhoda McDivitt; three grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Landis Homes East Chapel, Lititz.

Myers, Anthony, 87, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 8. Spouse: Lydia Yoder Myers. Parents: Oliver and Amy Lenota Streiby Myers (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 11 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Penner, Bertha Gaeddert, 99, Hesston, Kan., died Nov. 21. Spouse: Frank Penner (deceased). Parents: David and Agatha Regier Gaeddert (deceased). Survivors: children Milferd, Marvella Ratzlaff, Rachel Schmidt; 12 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 23 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Rufenacht, Reo, 93, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 16. Spouse: Erma Rufenacht. Parents: Elias and Louisa Aschliman Rufenacht (deceased). Other survivors: children Dwayne, Marlene Smucker, Marilyn Yoder; eight grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 19 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Zook, David, 83, Columbiana, Ohio, died Nov. 20 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: (1st) Edna Weaver Zook (deceased); (2nd) Emma Knopp Zook (deceased). Parents: Uriel and Kathryn Durr Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Rhoda, Mary Louise Uchida, Marlin, Herbert; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 24 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

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- **Boulder Mennonite Church** is actively seeking a ***VSer*** to support its vibrant, volunteer-led children's program at a local community homeless shelter near Boulder, Colo. Contact Eldon Mast, 720-839-6644.

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has ***biology teaching position*** available beginning Jan. 18, 2000, for a teacher on sabbatical. For information, contact Miles Yoder at 717-299-0436, or email myodes@juno.com

- **Southside Fellowship** seeks half-time ***pastor*** for two-person pastoral team. Good opportunity for experienced pastor interested in continuing seminary studies. Send resume to Pastoral Search Committee, Southside Fellowship, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517.

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities in Lancaster County, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time adviser positions available in group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466. EOE

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School** needs ***English teacher*** for 7th and 8th grades by the end of January 2000. This person would be part of a two-person English department instructing 101 students. Candidates are invited to send resumes to Dave Helmus, principal, Locust Grove Mennonite School, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; fax 717-394-4944; email DaveH@lgms.pvt.k12.pa.us

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment.

  Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; email emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

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  Contact Henry Miller, Box 260, Wellman, IA 52356; 319-646-6595; email hdm_emm@netins.net

- **Ridgeway Mennonite Church**, Harrisonburg, Va., of Virginia Conference, seeks up to full-time ***pastor of preaching and pastoral care***. Contact Lowell Eastman, 540-896-4424.

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- **Valleyview Mennonite Church**, London, Ontario, invites applications for a full-time ***pastor*** beginning Sept. 1, 2000. We are an urban congregation with an average attendance of 100 and growing. The pastor will serve as a spiritual mentor, emphasize preaching, lead in worship, provide visitation, and work with youth and young adults.

  Please direct inquiries to Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, c/o Lester Kehl, 4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

- **Service Adventure**, an inter-Mennonite 10 1/2-month service-learning program for young adults ages 17 to 20, needs qualified ***leaders***. Leadership experience, interest in young adults, spiritual discernment and conflict resolution skills are desired. Two-year term. Minimum age 24. Accepting applications now for terms beginning fall 2000. Openings include: Champaign, Ill.; Albany and Lebanon, Ore.; South Bend, Ind.; Johnstown, Pa.; Philippi, W.Va.; and Anchorage, Alaska. Information: Kent Dutchersmith, Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email KentTD@MBM.org

- **Mennonite Home of Albany**, Ore., seeks a ***chaplain*** to serve the spiritual needs of our residents. Responsibilities: daily devotions, worship services, resident and family counseling, spiritual activities, care conferences, memorial services. Qualifications: member of a Mennonite church, college degree, one year Clinical Pastoral Education.

  Send resume, CPE evaluation, and statement of theology to Chaplain Search Committee, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus SE, Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; fax 541-917-1399; email chrisz@mennonitehome.com

- **Immediate opening** for ***conference minister of youth/young adults***: Indiana-Michigan Conference (MC) and the eastern half of Central District Conference (GC) are seeking a full-time conference minister of youth and young adults. The person filling this position will serve as congregational consultant and resource coordinator to congregational leaders in ministry with junior high, high school and young adults. This person will be a member of the conferences' ministry teams. Pastoral training and experience are preferred. All interested inquiries are to be received by Jan. 15, 2000. An information packet concerning this position is available upon request.

  Please send a completed Ministerial Leadership Information form (MLI available from any conference office) to: John Hockman, search committee chairperson, P.O. Box 156, Topeka, IN 46571; 219-593-2389; fax 219-593-2150; email hockman@kuntrynet.com

- **Bethel College** seeks a ***director of alumni relations***. This position reports to the director of advancement. Position responsibilities: Develops strong relationships with alumni, coordinates college's annual phonathon and fall festival, plans all alumni events and programs. Required skills: Ability to plan, organize and implement; public relations skills; effective communication and writing skills; initiative and creativity; knowledge of budget building; bachelor's degree. Desired skills: Knowledge of Bethel College and established relationships with its alumni, ability to travel, computer literacy, supervisory experience. Screening of candidates begins immediately. Position open until filled.

  Send resume and cover letter to Sondra Koontz, director of advancement, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th, North Newton, KS 67117; email skoontz@bethelks.edu

- **Goshen College** seeks a ***coordinator for community relations*** for its Sarasota, Fla., extension program. This is a .60 FTE administrative faculty position beginning in January 2000. Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred. Experience in marketing and public relations required.

  Please send letter of interest and resume to James Miller, director, Goshen College-Sarasota, 3737 Bahia Vista St. Suite 3, Sarasota, FL 34232; 941-906-8883; fax 941-906-8884; email jimpm@goshen.edu

  Review of applications will begin immediately. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, Pocono Mountains, Pa., a multifaceted Christian camping ministry serving over 20,000 guests annually, seeks ***director of operations***, a ministry-minded individual gifted in personnel management and organization. Ensures a positive guest experience by overseeing housekeeping, food service, and buildings & grounds managers; coordinates major projects and oversees operational spending. Experience in Christian camping/conference ministry a plus. Must be sympathetic to Mennonite expression of faith. Salary and benefits package. Optional on-campus housing.

  Send resume to Executive Director, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; fax 570-595-0328; email retreat@enter.net

by Gordon Houser

A list of recent books and videos that may be helpful as we follow Jesus and that you may want to consider for Christmas giving:

Quiet Shouts by Louise Stoltzfus (Herald Press, 1999, $12.99) tells stories of Lancaster Mennonite women leaders.

Let's Talk: Communication Skills and Conflict Transformation by Barry C. Bartel (Faith & Life Press, 1999, $8.95) is designed to get Christians thinking, talking and living out effective skills in interpersonal communication, transforming conflict into growth.

Mustard Seed vs. McWorld: Reinventing Life & Faith for the Future by Tom Sine (Baker, 1999, $14.99) offers creative ways for parents, pastors and Christian leaders to reinvent their lives, focus their mission and create new possibilities for the new millennium.

Becoming and Unbecoming White: Owning and Disowning a Racial Identity, edited by Christine Clark and James O'Donnell (Bergin & Garvey, 1999, $22.95), presents life experiences of white multicultural educators and activists who have moved from a racist to an anti-racist consciousness.

Lessons from Emily by Peter and Mary Graber (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 1999) chronicles the journey of the parents of Emily, a child born with microcephaly—an underdeveloped brain. It's available free to MMA members. Call 800-348-7468.

She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall by M. Bernall (Plough, 1999, $17) is a mother's story of her daughter, who was killed at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., on April 20.

Parenting: Raising Faithful Children in a Fragmented World by Emily Demuth Ishida, *Reconcilable Differences: Gifts and Challenges of Relationships* by George Tan, *Managing Stress: Seeking Serenity for the Soul* by Frank Janzow and *Integrity: Ethics in the Workplace* by Beckie Steele and Elaine Voci (Augsburg, 1999, $5.99 each), are new books in the *Intersections* Small Group Series, which offers topic-based resources for Bible study groups.

Correction: In the Nov. 9 Resources (page 15), the title of David Elias' book is *Places of Grace*, not *In a Sheltered Valley Paradise*, and both it and *The Gladys Elegies* were published in 1997, not 1999.

Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition by Christine D. Pohl (Eerdmans, 1999, $15) revisits the Christian foundations of welcoming strangers and explores the necessity, difficulty and blessing of hospitality today.

Quilts from Two Valleys: Amish Quilts from the Big Valley, Mennonite Quilts from the Shenandoah Valley by Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 1999, $19.95) includes dozens of full-color photographs of quilts and landscapes.

What NeXt? Connecting Your Ministry with the Generation Formerly Known as X (Augsburg, 1999, $16.99 for book, $17.99 for video) presents stories from real-life congregations and includes practical ideas and approaches for youth leaders.

On Pilgrimage by Dorothy Day (Eerdmans, 1999, $16) includes diary entries written in 1948 and provides an intimate look into Day's personal life and essential background for understanding the Catholic Worker movement, which she founded.

Becoming a More Caring Congregation by Irma Janzen (Mennonite Central Committee Canada, 1999, $9 plus postage) is a 12-lesson Sunday school curriculum that discusses grieving, mental illness, disabilities, supporting aging parents and forming support groups.

A Sharing of Diversities: Proceedings of the Jewish Mennonite Ukrainian Conference "Building Bridges," edited by Fred Stambrook and Bert Friesen (Canadian Plains Research Center, 1999, $19.95 Cdn.) is available from the University of Regina, Regina, SK S4S 0A2, 306-585-4758.

Celtic Blessings and Prayers: Making All Things Sacred by Brendan O'Malley (Twenty-Third Publications, 1999, $12.95) includes ancient and newly written prayers and rituals. Blessings cover nearly every area of life, including family, friends, each room of the house, the meal table, work, journeys, rites of passage, the sick, seasons of the year, animals, creation and more.

Recommended reading

***Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America* by Ronald J. Sider (Baker, 1999, $11.99) will both challenge you to your core and give you hope. Sider, president of Evangelicals for Social Action and an ordained Mennonite minister, wants Christians to care as much about the poor as Jesus did. His aim, he writes, is "to define the problem of poverty, sketch a biblical framework within which to address the issue, outline a comprehensive vision for addressing it, and then develop a concrete agenda for ending the scandal of widespread poverty in the richest nation on earth." He's nothing if not ambitious. He uses statistics, charts and graphs to show where we've been as a nation and where we're headed. He employs biblical arguments to move us. But he is more than an idealist. He offers practical ideas for faith-based groups to work toward helping end poverty. This is a book to study and act on as a group. The need is great.**

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Rich Preheim

Remember the Jesuits, remember history, remember God

Maybe we are collectively having one of those "senior moments," the current euphemism for memory loss. But given what we are told to remember, it's no wonder we have diminished capacity to recall what is truly important.

History tells us to remember the Alamo, an important battle for white, slave-owning Protestant insurgents seeking to wrest away northern territory from Mexico in the early 19th century. About 200 rebels were killed by the Mexican army at San Antonio's Alamo mission in 1836, providing a rallying cry for Texan independence and fueling American belief in manifest destiny.

History also tells us to remember the Maine. That was the U.S. warship that exploded in the harbor of Havana in 1898, an incident blamed on a mine placed by the Spaniards, imperialists who were treating the Cubans in ghastly fashion. (In reality, the Maine disaster was probably due to an onboard accident.) The ship's sinking became the match that ignited the Spanish-American War, billed as a campaign to liberate Cuba. In fact, the war was as much driven by U.S. pursuit of its own political and economic empire.

To let stories of violence and oppression dominate the ways we recall the past is to dishonor God.

But where is the cry to remember the Salvadoran Jesuit priests?

On Nov. 16, 1989, Ignacio Ellacuria, Armando Lopez, Joaquin López y López, Ignacio Martin-Baro, Segunda Montes and Juan Ramón Moreno were brutally killed at their residence at the University of Central America in San Salvador, El Salvador. Their lives (plus the lives of their housekeeper and her daughter) were blown away by soldiers of a government opposed to the Jesuits' efforts to bring peace and justice to a country that had experienced neither for decades.

"Remember the Alamo" and "Remember the Maine" are calls for vengeance, woven into our consciousness by a selective but prevailing approach to history that glorifies violence and exploitation. That approach often ignores victims of violence and exploitation, many of whom devoted their lives to the pursuit of justice in the face of oppression.

Not surprisingly, then, the 10th anniversary of the six Jesuits' martyrdom passed with little commemoration in this country.

Other than observances at U.S. Jesuit colleges, there was one important event of national scope that witnessed to the Jesuits' legacy. Some 12,000 people turned out last month to protest at the U.S. Army's notorious School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Ga. The first SOA demonstration was held in 1990 on the first anniversary of the Jesuit murders. Nineteen SOA graduates have been linked to the slayings. The trail of blood runs from the campus of the University of Central America to the halls of power in the United States.

Working to close SOA is crucial in the pursuit of justice for Latin Americans burdened by unholy principalities and powers. But to know where we want to go, it is also crucial to know where we came from. We need to remember those people whose lives—and deaths—of faithfulness call us to seek alternatives to violence and oppression, which is frequently glorified in many of our recollections of the past.

We need to emancipate history "from the tyranny of our violent imaginations," write Carol Hunter and James Juhnke in *The Missing Peace: The Search for Alternatives to Violence in American History,* a book they are co-authoring on U.S. history from a peace perspective.

"These imaginations, stirred by stories of liberty achieved through violence and war, shape our understanding of who we are, ... our paradigms for evaluating contemporary problems and the options we believe are available," write Hunter and Juhnke. Hunter teaches at Quaker-affiliated Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.; Juhnke is on the faculty at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Ours is the God of history but also of justice. To let stories of violence and oppression, such as the Alamo and the Maine, dominate the ways we recall the past is to dishonor God. We must remember the martyrdom of the six Jesuits, of Clayton Kratz (see page 10) and of countless others because they lead us away from this world's ways to God's ways.—*rp*

the Mennonite

December 21, 1999

Christmas
sn't always pretty

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8 100 years for Mennonite Church in India
11 Seminarians march against hate
16 The muck and the mire

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

A Christmas story

Several weeks ago, I stayed with a wonderful Orthodox Christian family in Beit Sahour, Israel, just across from the field where shepherds heard the proclamation of the birth of the Prince of Peace. On Sunday morning, Souad Awwad, my host mother, invited me to worship with her in the small Orthodox Chapel in the Crypt below the floor of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. As we entered the small cave, where tradition holds that Christ's manger was located on that first Christmas morning, the priest stepped in after Souad and blocked my way. "Go away," he said. "Tourists are not allowed. Come back after 9 o'clock." Souad looked back and saw what had happened, walked up to her priest and told him that I was not a tourist, I was her guest.

It was a warm and beautiful service with about 25 parishioners huddled together in the crypt blackened by the centuries of smoke from incense and candles. When the priest came by offering the bread of Communion, he asked Souad whether I was Orthodox. She explained that no, I was Mennonite, so he passed me by and handed the bread of Christ's shared body to Souad. She waited until the priest had passed, smiled warmly and, in an act of religious civil disobedience, broke her bread in half and shared it with me. It was the spiritual high point of my trip, an Orthodox woman accepting me, a Mennonite man, as a part of her spiritual family in the true spirit of Christmas.—*Doug Hostetter, International/ Interfaith secretary, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Nyack, N.Y.*

The final judge

I didn't realize that I was an "enemy of the church" until I read Alvin Bontrager's letter (Readers Say, Nov. 23). A lifelong member of the General Conference Mennonite Church, I also served in the military for two years. So, in Bontrager's opinion that labels me and most likely hundreds more Mennonites who were in military service as enemies.

He is entitled to his opinion, and I respect that. However, I'm not too concerned about his comments since I don't recall his name appearing anywhere as the final judge of right and wrong.—*Harold P. Bloch, Emmaus, Pa.*

A request for understanding

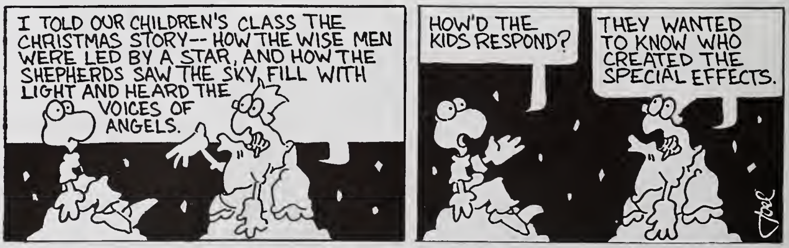
The Purdue statement "A Call to Affirmation, Confession and Covenant Regarding Human Sexuality" continues to receive much publicity and is often cited as a basis for the church's position. Therefore it may be well for us to review the statement.

In the statement, adopted by the Mennonite Church General Assembly in July 1987, heterosexual people in the church are called to "confess our fear and repent of our absence of love toward those with a different sexual orientation and our lack of understanding for their struggle to find a place in society and in the church" as well as to "covenant with each other to mutually bear the burden of remaining in loving dialogue with each other in the body of Christ, recognizing that we are all sinners in need of God's grace and that the Holy Spirit may lead us into further truth and repentence." The document concludes with a prayer "that the Holy Spirit may continue to work within us as we relate with understanding to persons with varied needs and concerns in our church."

Knowing that many in our congregations and neighborhoods are marginalized and in danger because of fearful and hateful attitudes toward sexual diversity, we want better to understand the struggle of every person who is working to find a place. We want the Holy

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


I TOLD OUR CHILDREN'S CLASS THE CHRISTMAS STORY-- HOW THE WISE MEN WERE LED BY A STAR, AND HOW THE SHEPHERDS SAW THE SKY FILL WITH LIGHT AND HEARD THE VOICES OF ANGELS.
HOW'D THE KIDS RESPOND?
THEY WANTED TO KNOW WHO CREATED THE SPECIAL EFFECTS.
Joel

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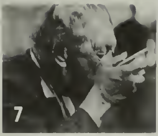
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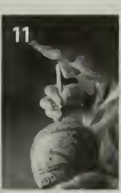
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y readers say

Spirit to lead us into further truth and repentance. We want to relate with understanding to people with varied needs and concerns. To these ends, would you publish a series of personal faith stories from our lesbian sisters, gay brothers, their parents, pastors, children and other loved ones?—*Ruth Liechty, Goshen Ind.*

Editor's note: General Conference Mennonite Church delegates at Saskatoon in 1986 adopted a statement on human sexuality similar to the Mennonite Church's 1987 Purdue statement.

Choosing our influences

God gave the Israelites 40 years for his divine and miraculous leading to become an influence. Gave them the opportunity to spy out the land under that influence. Of course, they were free to do it in their own wrong attitude.

Now what do we let be our influence? What has God, through his son, Jesus, through the enlightened leading of the Holy Spirit, provided for us to choose as an influence? "According to his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:3-4, KJV).

What are are some of these promises? Surely the promise of the Holy Spirit is one. And surely the enlightened leading of the Holy Spirit to bring into our remembrance what Christ has said is another promise.

Are we going to let these promises be our influences? Of course, we are free to block them by choosing to let our own ways be the influence. Peter says we can be partakers of that divine nature, but surely not without the right influence.—*Willard Becker, Freeman, S.D.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

What kind of Christmas card to send?

by Kenneth L. Gibble

I can never decide if the tradition of sending Christmas greetings is mostly a blessing or a headache. If you send even one Christmas card, you have to decide what kind of card to send. Maybe you do as I have sometimes done—buy a box of secular cards to send to your nonreligious friends and a box of religious cards to send to your friends who share your faith tradition.

On my visit to the local Hallmark store I decided to examine the nonreligious cards first, noting that their display took up twice as many shelves as the religious cards. The secular cards had artwork with lots of winter scenes, wreaths, evergreen trees. They contained messages like these: "With best wishes for the holidays and the coming year," "Greetings of the season and best wishes for the new year," "May the warmth of the holiday season fill your home with happiness." One card that came dangerously close to a religious theme had a picture of an angel lovingly holding the earth in its hands and the message, "Let us love the world to peace." Kinda cute. Another contained a smiling snowman on the outside and the words "Jolly Holidays" on the inside.

All nice, warm sentiments guaranteed not to offend anyone, be the recipient Gentile or Jew, Hindu or Buddhist, Jerry Falwell or the mysteriously missing Madelyn Murray O'Hair.

What about the cards in the religious section? As I expected, the artwork and graphics here were all in what Hallmark considers good taste. After all, this was the sponsor of the high quality "Hallmark Hall of Fame" TV specials.

Here were artistic renderings of cherubs playing musical instruments with the words, "Sometimes, if we listen, we can almost hear the angels." Here, on card after card, were the wise men bearing their gifts, scenes of that little town of Bethlehem, angels singing anthems and an occasional mother holding a child. This year, at least, shepherds seemed to be out of fashion. The sentiments expressed in words did have at least a slightly more religious flavor than did the cards in the nonreligious section. A few of them actually mentioned "God," as in "God bless you in this joyous season."

All the lovely Christmas cards to the contrary, there was nothing especially beautiful about the first Christmas. The Savior of the world was born to Mary and Joseph, alone and afraid in a strange village.

Buyers who preferred religious cards could choose from among 50 different offerings. Among those 50, I found one that had the word "Jesus" and two that had the word "Christ." There was but one Bible verse quoted among the 50 cards, and it was from the Old Testament. To be fair, there were a few cards that used the word "Savior" and a few that contained the phrase "his birth."

Good taste: Apparently Hallmark has decided that good taste at Christmastime means downplaying all that Jesus stuff. Hallmark, after all, has been in the business long enough to know what sells.

A few years ago I enjoyed reading one of William Raspberry's syndicated columns in which he wrote about receiving a Christmas card from a friend that read:

"I sincerely wish that you may enjoy the holiday and/or celebration of your religious, ethnic or sociopolitical choice over the coming weeks whenever it/they may fall and whatever it/they may be so named. … Now if this card still makes someone angry, the h— with 'em."

Raspberry said at first he thought the card was funny. But when he reflected on it, he wasn't so sure it was funny after all. He writes, "Friends who used to give you a hearty 'Merry Christmas!' now offer a generic 'Season's Greetings' or, if they're super careful, 'Have a good one.' " Asked Raspberry, "Is it not just possible that anti-religious bias masquerading as religious neutrality is costing more than we have been willing to acknowledge?"

Those are good questions about what the religious holiday called Christmas has become in our society, questions that have special relevance to those of us for whom Christmas is not merely a season of generic good cheer, not merely a holiday, but a holy day.

There is nothing generic about the Bible's account of the first Christmas. Luke's Gospel tells about a particular event that begins with a particular woman named Mary who is pregnant and not married. In the time and place Mary lived, bearing a child out of wedlock was a horrible disgrace. How will Joseph, her fiancé, react when she breaks the news to him? Will he end the engagement, hold her up to ridicule and shame? And what will Mary's cousin Elizabeth, the wife of a priest, say when she finds out?

Mary arrives at the home of Elizabeth. Just

Marilyn Nolt

by looking at Mary, Elizabeth grasps the situation and cries out: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." She welcomes Mary with open arms. Mary breaks into song: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Mary's song spells out what God is doing in the world: the powerful brought low, the lowly lifted up, the hungry fed, the rich sent away empty. This is religious faith translated into a vision of social justice. Later, when Luke gives us the details of the son born to Mary, we understand what this birth means. It means that God chooses to come to the world, not as a prince born to a royal family living in a grand palace, but as a child born to an unmarried peasant woman who must bear her child in a cattle shed. Salvation arrives in the most unlikely ways and places.

All the lovely Christmas cards to the contrary, there was nothing especially beautiful about the first Christmas. The Savior of the world was born to Mary and Joseph, alone and afraid in a strange village. It was Mary's first child. No other woman was there to help her through the birthing—no female relative, not even a midwife. While the shepherds had heard angels singing that night, there is no evidence that Mary and Joseph heard them.

That's what Christmas means—God coming to us in a way we never could have predicted, in a way that confounds every human expectation, in a way that threatens the status quo. After this night, nothing will ever be the same.

Great joy: There are those who, with the eyes of faith, can see what God was up to in that Bethlehem stable. To them—to us—it is good news of great joy. It is why the angels sang that night. It is why we celebrate Christmas with the music of gladness.

Why should we soft-pedal our joy by wishing our neighbors "Happy Holidays"? If your co-worker or friend is Jewish, surely you can extend greetings for a joyous Hanukkah. If you have Muslim acquaintances, wish them appropriate greetings on their holy days. But as we approach our own holy day, let's stop stifling our joy. Let us say "Merry Christmas" to those we meet with genuine smiles on our faces.

It is disabling for faith to fear what someone will think, to project that fear into an assumption. What if Jesus had worried that people might find his message not quite appropriate, not tasteful enough? Would he have watered down his message? Sweetened it? If so, those spiritually needy people in Jesus' day would have heard either a falsely soothing message, a cheerful "have a nice day" or a message so inoffensively generic that they would have forgotten it within minutes.

You do not honor someone else's religious convictions by hiding your own.

What kind of Christmas card to send? Well, you may have to search a bit for one that says what you want to say. Maybe you can find the kind that is blank inside and write your own greeting. But whatever greeting you send, try to get something in there about the birth of Jesus, the one we call Lord, Savior, Prince of Peace. Have your message express the good news of great joy that his coming represents.

Throw out all those innocuous cards with cute snowmen and sweet reindeer and silver bells. Keep a Santa Claus or two for the children, if you must. Historically, at least, he was a Christian saint. But forget the rest. There are plenty of people to send them, people for whom Christmas is little more than a round of parties and a stack of gifts that will have to be exchanged later.

You say it's too late, you've already sent out all your cards? Then go through the cards you've received and pick out the ones that say it best. Hang them up where you can see them in the coming days. And next year when you buy your Christmas cards …

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

Throw out all those innocuous cards with cute snowmen and sweet reindeer and silver bells. Try to get something in there about the birth of Jesus, the one we call Lord, Savior, Prince of Peace. Have your message express the good news of great joy that his coming represents.

Elizabeth Cutlett (UNICEF)

Advent reflections

On birth and new life

by Jim Cessna

Celebrate three courageous Two-Thirds World women who gave birth at Christmas.

Comfort

The first woman and her husband, Job, have been preparing for ministry at Nigeria's Gindiri College of Theology for the past 5 ½ years. Four years ago they had a son, Erik, who daily stops by our house for drinks of water as he meanders home from school.

Now just six months before graduation they find themselves unexpectedly expecting a baby. This woman has no prenatal care, no outside financial help, no balanced diet and no complaints. She, Job and Erik live with 12 other families in a compound designed for, at most, three families. The community toilet has filled up long ago, so everyone in the compound heads for the bush. The well is polluted, so Job regularly carries water from our house to theirs.

The couple has nothing they need for a new baby and no money to pay for medicines or the clinic. But the baby doesn't care, choosing as usual the middle of the night to greet the world. Labor is hard, blood is lost and they need help. Job wakes up our neighbor, the resident midwife, who transports them all to the clinic, where a boy named "God-saves" is delivered.

Semester exams are next week and both mother and "God-saves" will be there. Bringing new life here in the Two-Thirds World is difficult. The mother's name is Comfort, and she is doubly that.

Joy

The second woman and her husband, Moses, are also completing their final year at Gindiri College of Theology. Both of their fathers are retired pastors, which means no extra money is available from home. Moses is a good student and a gifted musician. His brilliant wife is the top student in the class. They have a 4-year-old child named Stephanie whose distended belly can't hide how desperate they all are for nutritious food.

Like Comfort and Job, they find themselves unexpectedly expecting a baby. This dear woman suffers from typhoid fever twice and malaria six times during her nine-month pregnancy. We all worry about her diet and the harsh medicines doing serious harm to both mother and baby. But the baby doesn't care; hard labor lasts two days, with no end in sight. So in the middle of the night she is rushed to the hospital, about 20 miles away, where they can do a cesarean section because the baby is seriously stressed. The one doctor on duty is drunk, so another 55-mile dash is made to a mission hospital.

While people pray and doctors prepare, just three minutes before the cut is to be made a beautiful baby girl named "Grace" is born. Both mother and Grace will take exams next week with Comfort and God-saves. Bringing new life here in the Two-Thirds World is difficult. By the way, the mother's name is Joy, and she is doubly that.

Mary

The third woman has it much harder than either Comfort or Joy. She is a poor, unmarried teenager who suddenly finds herself unexpectedly expecting a baby. Scandal travels like wildfire so she walks more than 60 miles to another village to spend three months with her favorite cousin, who alone will understand.

The man she is engaged to finds out and knows the baby isn't his, so he wants to sever the relationship, but a dream stops him cold. Dreams are listened to here in the Two-Thirds World. To make matters worse, the oppressive government makes a power play to make sure it gets everyone's taxes. This requires every male to register in his home town, which for this man is about 75 miles away. He takes his nine-months-pregnant fiancée with him to protect her from shame and to help her as best he can through her ordeal.

Together they walk for at least six days, getting food and water where they can, finding a cave where animals take shelter. The place is cold, damp and dirty. They have no midwife to assist and nothing for the baby. But the baby doesn't care, and in due time he greets a hostile world. They wrap him in strips of cloth and place him in a box of hay.

His name literally means "God-saves," and he certainly is a gift of "Grace," this one we call Jesus. Bringing new life here in the Two-Thirds World is difficult. His mother's name is Mary, and she is doubly blessed. And so are we. Eternally.

This Advent season we wish you good tidings along with Comfort and Joy. "For unto us a child is born. Unto us a Son is given. And the government will be upon his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace!" (Isaiah 9:6 NIV).

The third woman has it much harder than either Comfort or Joy. She is a poor, unmarried teenager who suddenly finds herself unexpectedly expecting a baby.

Jim Cessna is from Boulder, Colo., and was pastor of Open Door Fellowship in Denver. He serves with Mennonite Central Committee in Nigeria.

Religious News Service

A mission lifestyle

by Helen Lepp Friesen

They came wandering in, mostly one by one. Soiled clothing. Torn trousers. Some with alcohol on their breath. Bloodshot eyes. They plopped down at the row of bare tables and waited expectantly for the hot meal to be served.

One Christmas we didn't want to travel. The age of our young children made traveling less than enjoyable. It was to be our first Christmas with just our own immediate family. Instead of feeling sorry for ourselves, which I was tempted to do, we thought of other family activities. One idea was to go to the homeless shelter and help serve the evening meal.

A sister gave a bowl of soup to one man, who complained, "In Albuquerque at the homeless shelter they know how to serve food fast. You never have to wait like you do here."

I mumbled to myself, "Be thankful for what you get," and neatly categorized him as lazy.

The sister just smiled and asked, "Would you like some chili to go with your soup?"

It shamed and humbled me to feel the loving attitude of the sisters of Mother Teresa's order care for the forgotten of this society.

As I watched my 6- and 7-year-old children hand out bowls of steaming soup, tears came to my eyes. Such sincerity! When the men and women turned to see a child hand them the soup, they smiled. One man even fumbled in his pockets and gave my daughter a dollar. Jesus was born for all of us, no matter who we are. It's only by the grace of God that I am not without a home.

We're all familiar with the concept of mission. Maybe we don't think of a khaki-clad white man teaching the natives of Africa how to farm, but usually we think of someone who goes somewhere else for a period of time, deprived of the amenities of life. But mission shouldn't be something we do just for an interval but a lifestyle we choose.

There are other, practical activities we have been able to use. Because we live far from our families, I thought my children needed to adopt a grandparent, and I a mother. Before my youngest two were school-age, I asked at the local retirement home whether there were any elderly people who needed visitors. We found a wonderful woman who listened to my children's chatter for a whole hour and answered their many questions week after week. We'll never forget Mrs. Bishop.

In one way our objectives in these cases were selfish. But mission is not a one-way street. I have as much to learn from the homeless and the elderly as I have to give. Since that Christmas we tried to make it to the homeless shelter on a more regular basis. It gave us a good dose of what reality is like for many people in this country.

We don't need to wait to be assigned a mission field. The moment I decided to follow Jesus was when I was assigned to shine right where I am—at home, in my neighborhood, in New Mexico or in Nigeria. If I shine, then the light will come back to shine on me.

Jesus was born for all of us, no matter who we are. It's only by the grace of God that I am not without a home.

Helen Lepp Friesen lives in Gallup, N.M.

Celebrating a century of community

First MC missionaries arrived in India 100 years ago

DHAMTARI, India—Nearly 100 years to the day after the first missionaries sent by the Mennonite Church arrived in Dhamtari, the Mennonite Church in India gathered in the city Nov. 21 for a watch night service as part of a weeklong celebration to breathe life into the dawn of the church's second century.

In contrast to when the first missionaries arrived by ox cart on Nov. 22, 1899, Dhamtari today is a busy market town, anchored by a respected hospital and four Mennonite schools. The Mennonite Church in India has grown to 3,000 baptized members in 19 congregations and one outstation, covering a radius of 60 miles.

At the watch night service, retired bishop P. J. Malagar said now is the time for the Indian church to seek a new vision for its second century, a vision based in global mission. "This church can only survive if it goes into mission programs," said Malagar, the first Indian Mennonite bishop. "This church, small as it is, must go into global mission, or we don't have a future."

The service, held in Sunderganj Mennonite Church in Dhamtari, prefaced two days of official centennial events. In an inaugural sermon for the centennial on Nov. 22, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) president Stanley W. Green echoed Malagar's call for the church to look ahead. Referring to Jacob A. Ressler, the first missionary to arrive in Dhamtari, Green said, "In his heart there burned a vision, a vision for the kind of community that God was desiring to create in the midst of the earth—a community made of every tribe and tongue and nation."

The centennial allowed participants to share worship services and informal times, giving thanks for the past and praying for the future. Of the 1,500 people who gathered for the events, 1,000 came from outside Dhamtari. Nearly 70 guests attended from North America, representing MBM, the U.S. Mennonite Church and 10 missionary families. The celebration culminated in a Nov. 23 evening worship service of Communion and foot washing.

Earlier in the day, members of the Mennonite Church in India paraded through Dhamtari to singing and drums. Former MBM worker S. Paul Miller and Indian leaders Shant S. Kunjam and S.K. Kader unveiled a centennial monument. N. Leroy Kauffman, chair of the MBM board of directors, planted a tree.

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

A worshiper raises her hands to receive the benediction at a service in Dhamtari, India, during last month's celebrations marking the arrival of the first Mennonite Church missionaries a century ago.

MBM representatives made two presentations to the pastors of the 19 Mennonite Church in India congregations. Each congregation received a sculpture by Esther Kniss Augsburger, daughter of Elizabeth and Lloy A. Kniss, former MBM workers in Mohadi, India.

"I'm very honored to have been asked by MBM to make a sculpture for the churches in the country of my birth," said Augsburger, who donated her time to make the sculptures. "I owe much to this country and Mohadi for stimulating my interest in sculpture."

Each congregation also received special greeting cards sent by hundreds of Mennonite Church members in North America.

Other featured speakers at the centennial worship services included Myron S. Augsburger; Lee Snyder, moderator of the Mennonite Church USA; Indian leaders H. S. Martin, J. Harishchandra and Shant S. Kunjam; and former MBM workers S. Paul Miller, John A. Friesen and Paul G. Kniss.

"I can think of no more appropriate proclamation for the new century than that of Jesus as the Savior of the nations," Snyder said in a Nov. 22 sermon.—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

> I can think of no more appropriate proclamation for the new century than that of Jesus as the Savior of the nations.
>
> —*Lee Snyder*

India was pioneer mission field

India was pioneer territory, not only for the Mennonite Church but also the General Conference Mennonite Church and North American Mennonite Brethren. The country was the first overseas mission field for all three groups.

The Mennonite Brethren and the Mennonite Church each entered India in 1899, while the General Conference Mennonite Church did so a year later.

Other Mennonite-related groups who sent missionaries to India were the Brethren in Christ and Missionary Church. India today is home to eight Anabaptist groups with a membership of about 90,000.

Descendants of early missionaries journey to India with memories, mementos of building the church

DHAMTARI, India—The centennial celebration of Mennonite Church missionaries' arrival in India was a pilgrimage home for some visitors. Nearly 70 North Americans journeyed to Dhamtari, most of them children and grandchildren of the workers who gave years of service, and even their lives, to develop the Mennonite Church in India.

Twenty-seven descendants of missionary P.A. Friesen attended the centennial celebration. Friesen's first wife, Helena, died in 1921 during pregnancy. He then married Florence Cooprider, one of the first Mennonite women to become a doctor, who was serving in Dhamtari. Some of the Friesen descendants joined half-siblings John A. Friesen of Goshen, Ind., son of P.A. and Helena, and Grace Friesen Slatter of Filer, Idaho, daughter of P.A. and Florence, in a visit to Sankra, a former mission station 15 miles from Dhamtari, where John and Grace spent part of their childhood.

"Sankra is a symbol of home for the Friesens," said John's son Stan Friesen of Fresno, Calif. "For those of us who come from the West, it's a moment of pilgrimage."

He noted that the missionary bungalow now stands in ruins, but the church building has been well maintained. "The house reminds us that missionaries are temporal, but the community remains and endures, that God's Spirit continues to work," Stan Friesen said.

For Royal Bauer of Goshen, Ind., and his son, Steve, of Warmsprings, Va., the journey to India marked the first return to India since the family left 47 years earlier due to the advancing polio suffered by Royal's wife, Evelyn.

"Some of the buildings are no longer standing, but buildings are not the important thing," Royal Bauer said.

The children of Elizabeth and Lloy A. Kniss who came to the centennial used the visit as an opportunity to encourage Mohadi Mennonite Church, where their parents served. Family members attended a Sunday morning service and presented a gift to assist in much-needed building repairs. The family hopes to continue its involvement with the church.

Two grandchildren of Christian D. and Mina Esch journeyed to India with keepsakes of their work. Carl D. Esch of Bristol, Ind., carried a medal his physician grandfather received from the British government for his work in leprosy treatment. Laura Esch Miranda of Cayeh, Puerto Rico, brought her grandfather's diary, noting that her grandmother continued it after his sudden death in 1931.

Said Jonathan A. Friesen of Raleigh, N.C., a fourth generation descendant of P.A. and Helena Friesen, "What strikes me most is the kind of risk [the early missionaries] took and what they gave up."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Nursing school anniversary feted

In 1949, the dream of three Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers in India became a reality: A nursing school was started at Dhamtari Christian School.

The school celebrated its 50th anniversary Nov. 20 with its 47th commencement ceremony. Thirty-one students graduated from the nursing program, and 10 students received bachelor of science degrees.

"Go with a commitment to invest value in those who are broken and hurting and suffering," MBM president Stanley Green told the graduates.

The hospital and nursing school are overseen by the Mennonite Church in India. *—MBM News Service*

Bishop: Christians in India will face persecution

DHAMTARI, India—The first Indian bishop of the Mennonite Church in India believes a time of persecution is imminent.

"The church is a tiny, microscopic minority in India," says P. J. Malagar, who became bishop in 1955 and is now retired. "The church is going to face some bad times.

"Church leaders all over India are concerned," he says, citing recent church burnings and the murder of a Catholic priest while serving Communion.

The threat of persecution is something new since the days of British rule. "It's not really easy to be Christians. We have to take risks to be Christians," Malagar says. "The challenge is to give a clear witness."

Current bishop C. F. Nath says the government watches churches carefully, viewing all public activities as attempts to win converts. He says Bible teaching and baptisms can bring government investigations. "We were even asked questions about the centennial gate," Nath says, referring to a gate and a banner placed in front of Sunderganj Mennonite Church to welcome centennial celebration participants.

As times of trouble approach, Malagar says, the key is developing mature church leaders. "We need Bible-centered, church-centered leaders," he says. "But that's not enough. They need to know about the world. There was a time when we thought that wasn't good. Now, that's foolish."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Retired bishop P. J. Malagar (right) of the Mennonite Church in India visits with Carl D. Esch, grandson of former missionary Christian D. Esch, last month in Dhamtari during centennial celebrations of the first Mennonite Church missionaries' arrival in India.

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Shanece (left) and Shannon (right) Bowman, members of a childrens' club at South Christian Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., kid around with Michael Booth, the congregation's director of evangelism. In 15 years, the congregation has grown from 20 people to more than 250 and has been involved in a number of outreach activities, both local and global.

Choirs bring music to White House

When organizers from First Mennonite Church in Richmond, Va., this summer asked the White House if a group of peace proponents could sing in the President's residence as part of a July 4 hymnsing, they were turned down. But they were also told, "Let us know about Mennonite choirs who could sing at Christmas."

As a result, two Mennonite school choirs from Harrisonburg, Va., have sung at the White House during the Christmas season. Eastern Mennonite University's Chamber Singers performed Dec. 7 during an open house for White House staff and their families.

Then on Dec. 12, a choir of 20 Eastern Mennonite High School students also sang for staff members and their families as they toured the White House.

On Dec. 20, the Shenandoah Valley Children's Choir, which is part of EMU's preparatory music program, was scheduled to perform at the White House.

Growing and bringing forth fruit

Once dying, Pa. church now 'getting ready for harvest'

LANCASTER, Pa.—Fifteen years ago, the little brick church on the corner of Locust and South Christian streets in Lancaster had dwindled to about 20 members. After its start in 1933 as "services for the colored," South Christian Street Mennonite Church had struggled to serve its multiethnic, inner-city community through the Depression and the turbulent 1960s. When pastor Nelson Lehman resigned in 1984, many wondered if the congregation would continue.

Just three weeks before Lehman's resignation, Lawrence and Nereida Chiles had begun attending South Christian Street. They had been hired by the Mennonite congregations of Lancaster as the first program directors of Arbor Place, a Christian community center across the street from South Christian Street. Lawrence Chiles began to help with the preaching and leadership responsibilities in the congregation, and a year later he was called to serve as pastor.

Today South Christian Street is bursting, with 250 to 280 people filling the small brick building, and poised to move a block and a half away to a large Lutheran church the congregation has purchased and is renovating.

South Christian Street has a goal of bringing to faith, discipling and incorporating 10 to 12 new believers each year. To accomplish this, Chiles says, "a theology of presence—just hoping that someone gets saved—is not enough. Scripture says, 'How will they hear unless someone tells them?' We have moved from passive to aggressive in evangelism."

But along with this focus on intentional evangelism is an ongoing emphasis on discipleship. Michael Booth serves as the congregation's director of evangelism. He says he was saved at an early age but ended up in drug addiction and a lot of other "stupid stuff."

"Evangelism is not really evangelism without discipleship and incorporation into the body of Christ," Booth says.

Chiles, Booth and associate pastor Vincent Whitman are passionately concerned for the community beyond the congregation. They dream of having a leadership training institute for inner-city pastors, a Christian narcotics/alcohol 12-step program, a clinic and childrens' clubs. Currently 10 preadolescent girls meet weekly to be mentored by five women from the congregation.

"We're not building our church; we're building the kingdom," Booth says. "We're cooperating, not competing, with other churches in the community that share the same vision."

Last summer, in an effort to tear down walls, he met with representatives from 20 other city congregations to share mutual plans for summer outreach. Each Friday night when South Christian Street sponsors evangelism events with films, concerts or special speakers, and people respond—as 30 youth did at a Christian rap concert last summer—the leadership team works hard to get them plugged into congregations nearest their homes.

As the church has grown, people from Africa, Asia and Latin America have come to feel at home in South Christian Street's multicultural atmosphere and contribute to the church's growing global vision. This year a church member left to teach English in China. Others have served on work teams in Honduras. The congregation supports workers in the Middle East.

Says Chiles, "We're getting ready for the harvest."—*Jewel Showalter for EMM News Service*

Killing prompts AMBS community to march in witness to reconciliation and against hate

ELKHART, Ind.—Into an environment shaken by a murder being called a hate crime, students, faculty and staff from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) on Dec. 3 brought a message of hope.

"We march today because our Lord has given us the ministry of reconciliation," Todd Friesen, AMBS student told participants at the start of a prayer march organized in response to the Nov. 17 shooting of a 19-year-old African-American just several blocks from the seminary campus.

Sasezley Richardson was shot in a drive-by shooting and died three days later. Two white teenagers have been charged with the murder, and prosecutors and other sources are saying the killing was racially motivated.

Several AMBS students and faculty members participated in a community prayer vigil on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, but they wanted to do more to speak out against the killing. Students organized the march with three goals: to mourn Richardson's death, to be witnesses of Jesus Christ and to speak out against hate crimes.

The group of 80 who marched represented primarily the seminary community, but others from Elkhart and Goshen, Ind., joined in. Marchers carried signs with phrases such as "We pray for healing and hope" and "Christ brings us together." They walked silently to the site of the shooting, where they stopped to sing and pray for the victim and victim's family as well as for the two men charged with the murder.

The group continued through the neighborhood to the St. James AME Church near downtown Elkhart. There they stopped to pray again, confessing fear and silence in the face of the evil of racism and other prejudices. The walk concluded back at the seminary chapel with prayers for the participants to be renewed instruments of God's peace.

The banner which led the march was then torn into strips so marchers could take a piece with them. Malinda Berry, one of the student organizers, explained that the pieces can help people "remember that it is only through Christ that our wounds are bound."

The march made an impact on friends of Richardson's who were onlookers. "It's kind of touching, to see somebody could come together for a person, whatever their race may happen to be," Tyrone Anderson told the *Elkhart Truth.*

Todd Friesen said responses such as Anderson's were gratifying. "The march had both transformative aspects and witness aspects," he says. "The witness aspects were confirmed when I knew that two of his friends were there at the site with us."—*Mary E. Klassen*

Correction: A story in the Dec. 7 issue incorrectly said two African-American men were killed in the Nov. 17 shooting.

> We march today because our Lord has given us the ministry of reconciliation.
>
> —*Todd Friesen*

Stewardship university new MMA online venture

CHICAGO—Mennonite Mutual Aid will be going back to school next fall. MMA staff unveiled plans for a new online Stewardship University at the organization's board of directors meeting Dec. 3-4.

The World Wide Web version of stewardship education is expected to include classes, resources and online consultants. An onsite facilitator will likely run the project at the local level. "We have already gotten a request to work with an Anabaptist college," said project leader Mark Vincent.

Vincent, director of The Giving Project, joined MMA in August to develop the stewardship university, which will offer a pilot program in the fall of 2000.

"Stewardship is a worship experience of offering the first and best of life to God," Vincent said, "then managing the rest in generous ways that honor God."—*MMA News Service*

MEDA photo

Face to vase

An artisan with PROARTE, a Nicaraguan craft-exporting company, decorates a ceramic vase. The company, 65-percent owned by Mennonite Economic Development Associates, recently received a $159,000 order from Pier One Imports for 33,000 pieces of handicrafts. The deal is the third and largest PROARTE has had with the North American retail chain. MEDA officials said the new order shows that PROARTE can produce the quantity and quality of goods Pier One requires.

by the way ...

During World War I, 138 Mennonite draftees were court-martialed and sentenced to federal prison for refusing to obey military orders.—*Hungry, Thirsty, a Stranger* by Robert S. Kreider and Rachel Waltner Goossen

Conference ministers hold annual meeting

BROOKSVILLE, Fla.—Forty Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada conference ministers, representing 25 area conferences, gathered for their annual meeting Dec. 1-4 at Lakewood Retreat, Brooksville.

Participants heard from consultant Peter Steinke on "The Role of Leadership in an Anxious System" and from researcher Michael Wiese, who studied young people's thinking about pastoral ministry as a vocation. Other agenda items included updates on a denominational data base of people with ministerial credentials and reports on the transformation process of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada into the new Mennonite Church.

India-bound AMBS group aids cyclone relief

ELKHART, Ind.—When 13 people go to India next month on an Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) study tour, they will take with them at least $725 to give to Mennonite Central Committee relief efforts following a devastating November cyclone.

The money came from a Dec. 4 fund-raising meal on the AMBS campus and from subsequent contributions. The meal was originally planned to raise funds for the trip. But participants decided to donate the funds to MCC's cyclone relief. "If we who have so much don't take part in helping others like this, then we have lost the responsibility of being part of God's children," says AMBS student Wayne Mark Thomas, a native of India.

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Peacemakers to gather for Washington congress

WASHINGTON—Two longtime peace workers will address the Dec. 27-30 Peacemaker Congress, sponsored by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and New Call to Peacemaking. The congress will be held at Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington.

Kathy Kelly is coordinator of the Chicago-based Voices in the Wilderness campaign to end sanctions against Iraq. She has also served with CPT. Anne Montgomery, editor of *Swords Into Plowshares,* has served full-time with CPT in Hebron for the past four years.

Congress participants will also join a major public witness on Dec. 29 in front of the International Monetary Fund office in support of international debt relief. A procession will leave Luther Place Memorial Church and walk one mile to the IMF carrying empty bowls signifying hunger and poverty resulting from international debt. A CPT team will remain present at the IMF site from Dec. 26 through Jan. 1, 2000.

Bluffton College group wins national honors

BLUFFTON, Ohio—The Bluffton College PALS (Peer Awareness Leaders) group and its adviser received three national awards at the annual BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network General Assembly in Orlando, Fla., last month.

PALS is an affiliate chapter of BACCHUS and GAMMA, an international association of college- and university-based education programs. PALS received one of six Outstanding Programming Awards for "The 12 Days of Wellness" program it presented on campus last spring at BC and a first-place award in the Spotlight Media Poster Competition, which examined how groups used the media to help change stereotypes of alcohol use among students. Adviser Korine Steinke received one of six national Outstanding Adviser Awards.

Events raise $78,000 for Pennsylvania school

LANCASTER, Pa.—Lancaster Mennonite High School's Fall Gathering and Auction, Nov. 18-20, grossed $78,000 for student programs. The weekend included a production of *Charlotte's Web*, a barbecue, four auctions and dedication of the school's Center for Sports and Fitness. Sale highlights included $18,000 for a Chesapeake cruise, $1,400 for a wood train and $1,650 for two antique Schwinn bicycles. The quilt sale raised $12,657, with four quilts topping $900.

Births

Bartel, Samuel Laurence, Nov. 23, to Alyce (Yoder) and Larry Bartel, Hillsboro, Kan.
Coburn, Madisyn Sue, Nov. 26, to Dan and Marlena (Halteman) Coburn, Accident, Md.
Earnest, Sage Elizabeth, Nov. 26, to Beth (Stockton) and Scott Earnest, Nampa, Idaho.
Funk, Jacob Dale, Oct. 5, to Merlin Funk and Penni Walter-Funk, Hillsboro, Kan.
Guhr, Henry Jacob Friesen, Nov. 21, to Bradley and Sara (Friesen) Guhr, Roeland Park, Kan.
Hiebert, Taylor Grace, Nov. 13, to Maxwelle (Lacasse) and Roberto Hiebert, Steinbach, Man.
Kirby, Emily Kaye, Dec. 1, to Denise (Epp) and Michael Kirby, Lincoln, Neb.
Leichty, Evan James, May 30, 1999, to Kerry and Rebecca (Plank) Leichty, Harrisonburg, Va.
Martens, Riley Jordan, Nov. 21, to Jeff and Shannon (O'Reilly) Martens, Winnipeg.
Maust, Mayson Evan, Nov. 27, to Dana (Deigert) and Jamie Maust, Accident, Md.
Mead, Aaron Kliewer, Dec. 2, to Cheryl Kliewer and David Mead, Rochester, Minn.
Nell, Andrew James, Nov. 25, to Jim and Melanie (Garber) Nell, Manheim, Pa.
Penner, Colten Shawn, Nov. 16, to Lynette (Wiebe) and Shawn Penner, Wichita, Kan.
Swartzentruber, John Frederick, Nov. 23, to Lauren McKinney and John Swartzentruber, Harrisonburg, Va.
Wible, Lydia Gail, Nov. 30, to Carol (Burckhart) and Kevin Wible, East Greenville, Pa.
Yoder, Lucas Samuel, Oct. 23, to Lori (Kauffman) and Rick Yoder, Archbold, Ohio.
Zuercher, Katelyn Joy Yoder, June 29, to Sheila Yoder and Ed Zuercher, Phoenix.

Marriages

Antrim/Hilty: Aaron Antrim and Rachel Hilty, Bluffton, Ohio, Nov. 13 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.
Berg/Detrick: Douglas Berg, Somerset, Pa., and Harriet Detrick, Springs, Pa., Oct. 16 at Somerset.
Epp/Syring: Mike Epp, Henderson, Neb., and Glenda Syring, Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 26, at Christ Place Church, Lincoln.
Friesen/Peters: Nate Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Amie Peters, Henderson, Nov. 27 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Grasse/Voran: Gwendolyn Grasse, Boulder, Colo., and Stephan Voran, Boulder, Oct. 16.
Kauffman/Kum: Adrienne Kauffman, Lebanon, Ore., and Eric Kum, Lebanon, July 10 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.
Ordeñana/Reiff: Jairo Ordeñana, Lansdale, Pa., and Lindsay Reiff, Lansdale, Nov. 26 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Deaths

Basinger, Walter, 95, Kidron, Ohio, died Nov. 20. Parents: Elias and Elizabeth Baumgartner Basinger (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 22 at Kidron Mennonite Church.
Bontrager, Clara Schrock, 90, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Nov. 5. Spouse: Simon Bontrager (deceased). Survivors: children Doyle, Dean, Bill; 10 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.
Bowers, Lois Long, 91, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 30. Spouse: Benjamin Bowers (deceased). Parents: Noah and Clara Yoder Long (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 3 at Goshen.
Funk, Ralph, 70, Hillsboro, Kan., died Nov. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Margaret Unruh-Funk. Parents: Solomon and Esther Janzen Funk. Other survivors: children Melvin, Vernon, Carol Houdyshell, Linda, Eileen Nickles, Annette King; 14 grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 24 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.
Friesen, Frank, 81, Henderson, Neb., died Nov. 26 of cancer. Spouse: Marie Friesen. Parents: Peter and Katharina Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Delmer, Rogena Jantzen, Arlo, Rendell; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; five stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 30 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Gingerich, Ruth Fretz, 78, Elmira, Ont., died Nov. 20. Funeral: Nov. 23 at Tallmans Vineland Chapel, Vineland, Ont.
Halteman, Verna, 79, Telford, Pa., died Nov. 22, Parents: John and Mary Nice Halteman. Funeral: Nov. 27 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Headings, Nona Kropf, 88, Amity, Ore., died Nov. 5. Spouse: Emery Headings (deceased). Parents: Amos and Carrie Miller Kropf (deceased). Survivors: children Verle, Mark, Jay, Donna Brubaker; 12 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany, Ore.
Kandel, Alta, 89, Berlin, Ohio, died Dec. 1. Parents: William and Malinda Hochstetler Kandel (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 4 at Berlin Mennonite Church.
Massanari, Robert, 83, Champaign, Ill., died Nov. 7. Spouse: Lila Grieser Massanari. Parents: Joe and Lizzie Sommers Massanari (deceased). Other survivors: children Michael, Larry, Kaye, Kris; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at First Mennonite Church of Champaign, Urbana, Ill.
Nofziger, Alfred, 78, Lebanon, Ore., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Marjorie Gerig Nofziger. Parents: Daniel and Lydia Erb Nofziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Martin, Nadine LeFrancis, Laurence, Cheryl Berkey, Mark, Jodi; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.

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- **Towamencin Mennonite Church** in Kulpsville, Pa., is seeking an ***administrative assistant*** with computer skills to work about 10 hours a month in church office. Call 215-723-1280.

- **Ridgeway Mennonite Church**, Harrisonburg, Va., of Virginia Conference, seeks up to full-time ***pastor of preaching and pastoral care***. Contact Lowell Eastman, 540-896-4424.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

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  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Wellman Mennonite Church**, Wellman, Iowa, a rural congregation committed to "Sharing Christ's Love," seeks a full-time ***pastor***. Candidates should have a strong Christian commitment, support the Mennonite Confession of Faith and exhibit qualities of the "Good Shepherd."

  Contact Henry Miller, Box 260, Wellman, IA 52356; 319-646-6595; email hdm_emm@netins.net

- **Valleyview Mennonite Church**, London, Ontario, invites applications for a full-time ***pastor*** beginning Sept. 1, 2000. We are an urban congregation with an average attendance of 100 and growing. The pastor will serve as a spiritual mentor, emphasize preaching, lead in worship, provide visitation, and work with youth and young adults.

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  Send resume, CPE evaluation and statement of theology to Chaplain Search Committee, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus SE, Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; fax 541-917-1399; email chrisz@mennonitehome.com

- **Service Adventure**, an inter-Mennonite 10 1/2-month service-learning program for young adults ages 17 to 20, needs qualified ***leaders***. Leadership experience, interest in young adults, spiritual discernment and conflict resolution skills are desired. Two-year term. Minimum age 24. Accepting applications now for terms beginning fall 2000. Openings include: Champaign, Ill.; Albany and Lebanon, Ore.; South Bend, Ind.; Johnstown, Pa.; Philippi, W.Va.; and Anchorage, Alaska.

  Information: Kent Dutchersmith, Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email KentTD@MBM.org

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  Send resume and cover letter to Sondra Koontz, director of advancement, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th, North Newton, KS 67117; email skoontz@bethelks.edu

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for the following tenure-track faculty positions beginning fall semester 2000:

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  Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications for all positions will begin Jan. 18, 2000 (for Food & Nutrition, Feb. 1) and continue until appointments are made.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of references and official transcripts to Joetta H. Schlabach, special assistant to the dean of academic affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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by Gordon Houser

As we come to the end of another year, many of us will obtain calendars or date books. We like to mark time, keep track of the passing days of our lives.

One way to do that more meaningfully is to use a devotional book that includes readings or reflections for each day of the year. Using these books can help keep our spiritual focus alive. They provide a means of self-discipline, a way to reflect on God's work in us and in our world that can easily escape us if we don't take time each day to do it. A short daily reading—as most of these books provide—seems manageable for most of us.

Many such books are out there, vying for our attention. Several have come across my desk that seem worthy of mention.

The Joy of the Saints: Spiritual Readings Throughout the Year, edited by Robert Llewelyn (Templegate, 1989, $16.95) is an anthology of readings from a variety of Christian sources, including Augustine, Isaac of Syria, Julian of Norwich, Martin Luther, John Wesley, the Celtic tradition, the Desert Fathers, *The Cloud of Unknowing* and others. Llewelyn writes an extensive introduction that I find helpful background to the writers. I plan to use this one.

Gospel Days: Reflections for Every Day of the Year by Joan Chittister (Orbis, 1999, $14) comes out of the monastic practice of "lectio divina," or thoughtful reading of a passage of Scripture. Each month of readings consists of reflections on a particular passage from the Gospels. The book, writes Chittister in an introduction, is "about the gospel life now and here, about its daily demands and common questions." Each reading is short and thus demands more time spent in reflection.

366 Ways to Peace by Melodie M. Davis (Herald Press, 1999, $12.99) is a compilation of Scripture verses and quotations of advocates for peace. This coil-bound perpetual calendar is handy for sitting on your desk to remind you each day of God's call to be a peacemaker. In a preface, Davis acknowledges that "not everyone will agree with the choice of people quoted," but "even scoundrels say and do some things we applaud."

Bible Diary 2000 (Paulist, 1999, $19.95) combines daily Bible readings with a daily planner, an appointment book and biblical commentary and reflection by Donagh O'Shea. The Bible readings follow the Catholic Church's lectionary. I've used the 1999 version and found it a helpful resource.

Whatever you use, may you find enrichment each day as you seek spiritual growth.

From our readers: Controversy has swirled around *Dogma* (R), yet I was curiously uplifted by it. The movie's basic plot concerns two angels, kicked out of heaven by God, who have found a loophole to let them go "home" (they've been exiled to Wisconsin). The movie also explores a woman's loss of faith and how she wants to believe in and know God. Be warned: *Dogma* is crude, with startling violent segments. But it is also funny, with characters like Rufus, the 13th apostle. In the end, however, I felt the movie only poked fun at the institutional church and dealt with the longing and mysteries of knowing God in a positive way.—*Melanie Mueller, Halstead, Kan.*

films

The Insider (R) is perhaps the best investigative journalism film since *All the President's Men*. Michael Mann tells an intense, if a bit too-long, story of "60 Minutes" producer Lowell Bergman (Al Pacino) helping a cigarette industry whistleblower (Russell Crowe) go public in the face of death threats and a smear campaign. It shows the power of Big Business and the weapon for good that the media can be.

Being John Malkovich (R) is one of the most original and quirkiest films of the year. It begins with a provocative idea, that people find meaning in being someone else, but it devolves into a sci-fi flick with more humor than pathos.

Good as *Toy Story* was, *Toy Story 2* (G) is better. A well-told story for kids, with imaginative characters, it includes laugh-out-loud humor for adults as it alludes to other popular movies.

books

The Sermon on the Mount: Inspiring the Moral Imagination by Dale C. Allison (Crossroad, 1999, $17.95) is part of the Companions to the New Testament series, which aims to unite New Testament study with theological concerns in a manner accessible to lay readers. New Testament scholar Allison succeeds in this readable but well-documented discussion of Matthew 5–7. He quotes from an array of sources: other scholars, the Church Fathers, the Talmud and authors as disparate as Dostoevsky, Plato or John Henry Newman. He writes, "The Sermon is not primarily concerned with what is practical or possible in the here and now but with the unobstructed, perfect will of God." He is a stronger historian than theologian, however, and shows little patience for, or knowledge of, the nuances of pacifist interpretations. Still, this is a helpful resource in understanding the Sermon on the Mount.

music

A Rare Benediction by the West Coast Mennonite Chamber Choir ($18.38 Cdn. for CD, $13.38 Cdn. for cassette), the eighth by this choir under the direction of Tony Funk, consists of 19 "distinctive choral selections for the Christmas season." While a few of the pieces, such as "The Holly and the Ivy" and "De Virgin Mary" are familiar, most are not. The recording includes music by Josef Rheinberger, Benjamin Britten and Johannes Brahms, plus lesser-known carols. It's a pleasant sound, cleanly produced, with fine accompaniment by Betty Suderman on piano. Funds from sales go to the work of Mennonite Central Committee Supportive Care Services, which produced the CD. To order call 800-622-5455.

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Gordon Houser

The muck and the mire

Talk about stress.

The girl, an adolescent, barely a teen, was uncomfortable. She arrived in the crowded town wanting only to lie down, but after many tries, she and her companion found nothing available. Finally, someone let them sleep with their animals. At least it'll be warmer, she thought. The sun had gone down more than an hour earlier, and she was cold. Her thin cloak did little to warm her.

They had barely unloaded their few belongings when the contractions began. She had been afraid of this moment, had talked with her mother about it, had prayed to be back home in Nazareth before it occurred. Now the worst was about to happen.

As night deepened, the pain increased. She wanted her mother. She stifled a cry. Her mother was not there, would not be. She was alone, except for Joseph. But what could he do? He had been kind, had agreed to keep the engagement despite the terrible risks. She hardly knew him, but now, already in debt to his kindness, she needed him.

How easily we forget the dangerous vulnerability of Jesus' coming. His mother, a pregnant, unwed teenager, alone with Joseph in a town far from home, could have died giving birth. Many did. The baby could have died.

The pain became nearly unbearable. She no longer stifled her cries. She could not call for her mother, so she cried, "Joseph!"

Makes all our worrying about the busyness of the Christmas season pale in comparison, doesn't it? How easily we forget the dangerous vulnerability of Jesus' coming. His mother, a pregnant, unwed teenager, alone with Joseph in a town far from home, could have died giving birth. Many did. The baby could have died. Born to a couple living under occupation, soon to be refugees, fleeing to a foreign land for safety.

As we celebrate Christmas in our comfortable homes, warm and well-fed, singing carols about the little town of Bethlehem ("How still we see thee lie") and reading the Bible story of Jesus' birth, let's remember that God comes to us in the muck and mire. There in that dusty straw, amid the manure of sheep and cattle, a young mother gave birth to a baby who was "the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

She must have lain there, holding the bloody infant to her breast, covering his shivering body as best she could, and breathed an exhausted thanks that this much, at least, was over. Awaiting her was the long journey back to her village, having to face the possible censure of the elders, the disdain of the villagers. But for now, she could rest, sleep, hold this miracle child.

Later a noise interrupted her sleep as dirty shepherds found their way into their makeshift shelter. She woke with a start, fearing bandits or the owner wanting them gone. Instead, these men confirmed what she already suspected but could not bear to hope, that her baby was special. The voice she had heard months ago, what now seemed a lifetime ago, was no delusion. She had said yes then, without thinking. Now she saw that she would have to say yes each day.

Her mother had told her, warned her, that a child will change your life completely. Now she began to understand that this child would not only change her but many others. A smile of joy creased her mouth as the shepherds left. Later, alone again with Joseph, she shivered from a pang of fear. Who was she to handle such a child? Yet she must. The task was given her, and she must carry it out, as best she could, day by day.

Christmas will end, and we will return to our daily tasks. Let us enter them with courage and hope, knowing that God is with us in the muck and mire of our days. Let Mary, Jesus' faithful mother, be our guide, our example, as we say yes to that voice calling within us.
—*gh*

Elizabeth Cutlett (UNICEF)

theMennonite

December 28, 1999

At left: Peter A. and Elizabeth (Dickman) Penner, ca. 1910 who went to India in 1900 as Mennonite missionaries. Below: Stephanie Dirks (left), daughter of mission workers Rudy and Susan (Andres) Dirks, and her friend Dorcas in Botswana.

100 years of Mennonite mission

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The greatest?

In response to your call for nominations for the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century (Dec. 7), do you really want to do this? It sounds much too much like Jesus' disciples discussing who among them was greatest. For many of us, the people who were most influential in guiding us to follow Jesus were local people, virtually unknown at the area conference or denominational level. Why should we honor those who influenced many as if they are more important than those who helped only a few?

We would like to suggest that you reconsider. Your call feels too much like worrying about who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.—*Robert and Alice Ruth Ramseyer, Bluffton, Ohio*

EDITOR

the Mennonite

The Mennonite seeks to serve the integrating Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.

Full-time editor needed for this weekly magazine, to begin work no later than July 2000.

The editor has these responsibilities:

- planning and coordinating production of the magazine
- building and nurturing constituency relationships
- being the primary editorial writer
- overseeing the work of other staff members in dispersed locations in editing, design, subscriber services, web presence, advertising sales and marketing

The successful candidate will have these characteristics:

- a strong Christian faith
- familiarity with the traditions that are forming Mennonite Church USA
- active involvement in the Mennonite faith community
- leadership gifts and management experience
- significant publications/journalism experience

Please send a letter of introduction, resume and three professional references (or your suggestions for editor candidates) by January 31, 2000, to:

Editor Search Committee
125 N. Shippen Street
Lancaster, PA 17602

the Mennonite

Scottdale, Pa. *Newton, Kan.*

Complimenting and sharing

The Oct. 26 issue was one of the best. Your articles on Y2K were informative and insightful. While it may be poor form to comment on letters to the editor, I would like to do so, particularly the letters from Brian Arbuckle and Eber Martin outlining what our response to practicing sinners should be. It is evident that Marion Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind., has been praying for wisdom. I hope that someone in Shipshewana has a copy machine, a postage stamp and the willingness to share their work with the rest of the conference. *—Keith Krehbiel, Deer Creek, Okla.*

The first utterance

Some people advocate posting the Ten Commandments in public places such as schools or courts. In a well-known Christian magazine, an editor objected to doing so on the grounds that law without gospel is incomplete and harmful. Also, he asked which version to post, since Christians have two ways of counting to 10. A letter of response counseled that law may drive sinners to grace even without gospel explicitly being presented. However, both writings followed a practice in some parts of Christianity of segregating bad news to the Old Testament and good news to the New Testament, which implies that grace was absent from God's revelation at Mount Sinai.

The solution to this alleged defect of the Ten Commandments would be to include the first commandment, the one that is always left off Christian lists of the 10: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Because Christians omit this, they split one or another of the remaining nine.)

In Hebrew, God's speech at Mount Sinai is called "aseret ha-dibrot," or "The Ten Utterances" (from Exodus. 20:1, "And God spoke all

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Vol. 2, No. 48, December 28, 1999

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y readers say

these words, saying ... "). Perhaps under the influence of the Greek translation, there is a tradition of seeing a commandment in the first utterance. It implies a commandment to believe in God and to believe that God has acted redemptively in history.

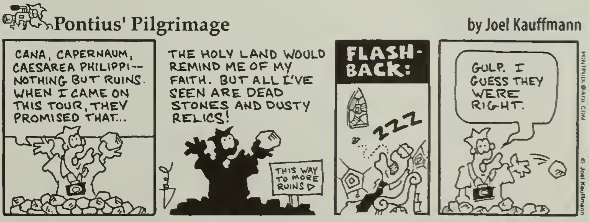
The first utterance or commandment tells its audience who God is, where they came from and what God has done for them. This self-understanding has moral implications. According to the Scriptures, past enslavement provides a capacity and necessity to empathize with the lowly: "You shall not pervert the justice due a stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment in pawn. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you" (Deuteronomy 24:17-18); "You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in Egypt" (Exodus 23:8). In ancient Israel, the story of redemption from Egypt was to be recited by each person who brought an offering of first fruits (Deuteronomy 26:5-11). The offering was accompanied by worship and rejoicing, together with the sojourner.

I am not really advocating that public places display biblical passages. I'm more interested in seeing that people who value the Ten Commandments read them from the beginning.
—Jon Olson, Pittsburgh

Cover photos from *Window to the World: Extraordinary Stories From a Century of Overseas Mission 1900-2000.*

Pontius' Pilgrimage

by Joel Kauffmann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10 years

An overview of a century of Mennonite mission work overseas

by James C. Juhnke

Could Mennonites partake of the spirit of benevolent overseas expansion without also absorbing its nationalistic triumphalism and cultural arrogance?

A century ago, Mennonite missionaries of the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) branches began mission work on the Chhattisgarh plain of India's Central Province. They were early leaders in a movement that changed Mennonitism from its European origins into a worldwide multicultural church. They were inspired by the Great Commission to "go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15).

In carrying the gospel across cultural boundaries, they re-enacted the story from the Acts of the Apostles. The gospel of Jesus Christ had jumped the barriers between Jew and Greek. Now it would cross from German-speaking Americans to Hindi-speaking Indians, changing both peoples in the process.

MC-GC cooperation: The MCs and GCs cooperated in getting started. Both were responding to news of a devastating famine in India. The MCs arrived first, in March 1899, led by J.A. Ressler. They established a mission station at Dhamtari. When two GC couples (Peter and Elizabeth Dickman Penner and John and Susie Hirschler Kroeker) arrived in December 1900, Ressler welcomed them to make a temporary home on the MC compound. He helped the Penners and Kroekers choose mission sites at Champa and Janjgir. The GC mission board had advised their youthful missionaries to begin their work not far from the MCs.

Both the MC and GC missionary teams soon established mission stations with buildings and ministries typical of Protestant missions in India. Their intentions were spiritual, to win souls for Christ and to build the church. They naturally assumed that ministries should include education, health care, orphanages and other social services.

Mission expansion: This work in India was part of a wider explosion of Mennonite missionary development at the end of the 19th century. Two other groups came to India from North America at the same time: Mennonite Brethren to the Hyderabad area, where MBs had been working under a Baptist mission since 1890, and some ex-Mennonites in the Hepzibah Faith Missionary Association. Meanwhile, the Brethren in Christ began mission work in the Matopo Hills of Rhodesia, and the Light and Hope Society, organized by John A. Sprunger of Berne, Ind., sponsored an orphanage for Armenian Christians in Hadjin, Turkey.

The new missions enthusiasm had also reached MCs in the eastern United States. In 1898, Lancaster County Mennonites began work among poor African-Americans at the Welsh Mountain Mission—reaching out to culturally different people in an eastern area of the county. Soon thereafter the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren started a mission to African-Americans at Elk Park, N.C.

The new work of 1898-1900 built upon the efforts of earlier Mennonite missionary pioneers. In 1847, the Dutch Mennonites had organized a Mennonite Missionary Association to send missionaries to Indonesia. Mennonites in Russia had generously supported this mission with money and workers. In 1880, GC Mennonites had begun mission work among the southern Cheyenne and Arapaho in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). So the GCs had already had two decades of cross-cultural missionary experience before beginning the work in India. They did not have a separate board for "home" and "foreign" missions. Their name for the work in both Oklahoma and India sounds strange and condescending to us today: "Heidenmission"—mission to the heathen.

Gospel vs. gospel: At the outset, mission supporters were a small minority in the church. The movement faced strong resistance from traditionalist Mennonites who had no vision for evangelical outreach beyond cultural borders. As historian Theron Schlabach has shown in *Gospel Versus Gospel*, the traditionalist critique was itself grounded in Scripture. The Mennonite "gospel of humility" attempted to live out the way of Jesus in communities of commitment. Traditionalists sensed that the new mission movement was rather oriented to aggressive work and busy organization. It lifted up missionary heroes in ways that seemed prideful. It preached a "plan of salvation" that used the language of Protestant revivalism. The 1898-1900 burst of Mennonite mission activity coincided with expansionist currents in broader American society. In 1898 the United States fought and won a war against Spain in Cuba and the Philippines. For the first time, the country became an imperialist nation with overseas possessions. Could Mennonites partake of the spirit of benevolent

Peter A. and Elizabeth (Dickman) Penner, ca. 1900, who went to India in 1900 as Mennonite mis-

COM photo from *Window to the World*

# of Mennonite mission

overseas expansion without also absorbing its nationalistic triumphalism and cultural arrogance?

A denomination revitalized: Samuel S. Haury, who in 1880 began mission work among the Arapaho Indians, argued that one of the great benefits of mission would be renewal in the home churches. "The churches which do the most for the heathen missions," wrote Haury, "develop most quickly and most energetically in the home country." In the 20th century, Haury's observation became reality for GC, MC and other branches of Mennonites. Overseas mission work became a central preoccupation for the church.

It was an activity a growing majority could support even when they disagreed on other matters. Young people volunteered for self-sacrificial careers as the mission expanded to new fields in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Women's societies organized for prayer and financial support. Mennonite farmers and businessmen gave generously to the cause.

After World War II, the overseas mission movement reached a new take-off stage. Between 1945 and 1959, 52 Mennonite missions were founded. The Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, a relative latecomer to the stage, grew rapidly to outstrip other Mennonite boards in personnel, program and budget.

Surprises in mission: A century ago, Europeans and Americans saw Africa as "the dark continent." They expected Africa to be more resistant to the gospel than other regions. They were surprised when the church grew more rapidly in Africa than in India or China. The GCs worked in the Belgian Congo with other Mennonite groups in the Congo Inland Mission. Membership in the Congo churches took off in the 1930s, at a point when economic depression in America forced a cutback of missionary funds and personnel.

Missionaries from Eastern Board, who began work in Tanganyika (Tanzania) in 1934, took part in an "East Africa revival," which began in the 1940s. That movement led to rapid church growth. It also led the missionaries into new spiritual insights that changed their attitudes toward distinctive features of traditional Mennonite culture. Their witness brought changes back in Lancaster County.

In China, and later in Ethiopia, Mennonites were surprised by the resilience and renewal of the local church in the face of persecution. In 1949, when the Communists took over China, the missionaries were forced out and the church went underground. For years it seemed the church had been all but destroyed. By now it is clear the church in China has survived with surprising vitality. In Ethiopia the persecution was less severe and protracted than in China, but the resulting growth of the church was no less amazing.

Cultural interaction: Overseas missions were always the scene of creative cultural conflict and interaction. Missionaries brought a gospel wrapped in Western cultural forms. Mennonite requirements of nonconformity in clothing, hairstyles or worship practices did not necessarily fit well in non-Western societies. Traditionalist U.S. Mennonites argued that women converts to the church in India should wear a conspicuous prayer veiling, as did MC Mennonite women in the United States. But the missionaries in India worked out a compromise. Women could cover their heads with part of their regular garment.

Another example of such cultural conflict shows up in the minute books of the Congo Inland Mission. In 1919, workers voted to institute the foot washing service "according to the command of our Lord, beginning the first quarter after the arrival of the necessary equipment."

On all fields, the growth of the church depended upon the preaching and evangelism of native church leaders who could model and explain the ways of the church in language appropriate for their own culture.

World Mennonite identity: The growth of Mennonite churches overseas transformed the face of world Mennonite identity. The numbers of Mennonites outside the traditional European and North American heartland rivaled and surpassed the numbers in the "sending" churches. One of the creative projects planned for the 21st century is a global Mennonite history, with chapters written by Mennonite scholars from Asia, Africa and Latin America. In the 21st century, North American Mennonites can expect to learn much from the churches overseas.

James C. Juhnke is professor of history at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

Stephanie Dirks (left), daughter of mission workers Rudy and Sharon (Andres) Dirks, and her friend Doreenie in Botswana

COM photo by Dirks

On all fields, the growth of the church depended upon the preaching and evangelism of native church leaders who could model and explain the ways of the church in language appropriate for their own culture.

100 years

Storie
from mission

Accepted by God

Bent with age and in pain, Pataitine Bai crawled up the church steps in Champa, India. No matter how miserable she felt, Pataitine attended services regularly. She was not one to give up. Children teased her when they met her on the road, saying, "There is no place for you in heaven, Pataitine Bai," to which she replied, "I know the Lord has a place ready for me."

In her younger years, Pataitine's husband was afraid that other men might look at her. One day, in a fit of jealous rage, he tried to cut off her nose, leaving an ugly scar as evidence that he almost succeeded. She fled for help and protection to the home of P.A. and Elizabeth (Dickman) Penner, the first General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries to India. They took her to Bilaspur to have her nose stitched down. Her husband was imprisoned and later died.

One of the first converts to Christianity in the mission, Pataitine worked in the Penners' home for many years. She and her second husband, Chandu, accepted Christ and were baptized in 1910. Throughout the years, their children were employed in mission hospitals and schools. One of their grandchildren participated in the Mennonite Central Committee Visitors Abroad program.

COM photo by Benjamin Sawatzky

"I know the Lord has a place for me": Pataitine Bai

Having lived a saintly life, Pataitine was publicly honored in 1960, at the 60th anniversary celebration of the India mission.—*Benjamin Sawatzky and Kathryn (Loutham) Jantzen*

The three stories on these pages are from *Window to the World: Extraordinary Stories From a Century of Overseas Mission 1900-2000*, compiled by Tina Block Ediger (Faith & Life Press, 1999). Used with permission.

Abandoned but not forsaken

The experiences I had in my earlier years as a Christian have shaped my understanding about the church.

I came to know the Lord through the early General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries while they were still in Japanese language study in Kobe.

I was 17 and the youngest of a study group the missionaries led. I had little interest in the Bible. My purpose was to study conversational English. Tea and homemade cookies also drew me to class. The Lord used my impure intentions for the good, however. One day when I was studying the book of Acts with Peter Voran, I came under conviction. On my way home, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

I felt warmth among the people in the small Bible class. Four of us were baptized months later by Peter Voran. That was the happiest moment I ever had.

A couple of weeks later, these missionaries told us the mission had decided to work mainly in Kyushu, and that they did not plan to start a church in Kobe. They encouraged us to find another church. We were shocked and felt forsaken. We felt like unwanted children.

Then we decided to form our own church. The missionaries' garage became our meeting place. From then on, we met by ourselves, and every baptized member started to preach. When it was my turn, I preached from the book of Genesis.

We were all immature. We had no theological education. We knew so little about what it means to be a church, but we nevertheless felt we were one. Though small and young, we committed ourselves to the Lord and to each other.

Strength to forgive

It was Maundy Thursday in the village of Tabola, Lesotho. A group of believers gathered to discuss Jesus' words from the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Ntate Motabola, in his late 80s, cleared his throat and told this story:

"In 1970 the election results in Lesotho were declared void by the prime minister because his party lost. The opposition party, which had won the election, then led an unsuccessful coup. This so infuriated the prime minister that he ordered his followers to arrest all who were sympathetic to the attempted coup. Widespread terror followed. Many people fled the country, while others disappeared.

"During this time, late one night, there was a knock on my door. I recognized a young man from our village. The others I didn't know. They ordered me to walk with them to Peka, about five kilometers from my home. When we arrived I recognized others who, like myself, had voted for the opposition party. We were forced to sit on the ground with our legs stretched out in front of us. Men supportive of the prime minister sat on our legs while others beat the bottoms of our feet with sticks. They wanted us to confess what we knew about the coup, or at least give names of people who were involved."

Ntate Motabola became silent. Nobody encouraged him to continue, but he did. "I knew I was innocent and could only pray." Then he chuckled softly and asked, "Have you ever tried to milk a cow that has wet teats? It doesn't work. One's hands just slip off the teats. And that's how it was with the stick that was beating my feet. It just kept slipping off my feet so that it wasn't very painful.

"All through the night, the beating and questioning continued. Finally at dawn I was released and told to go home. Some of the other men had swellings the size of a big ball on the bottoms of their feet. They couldn't even stand up, let alone think of walking home. I was able to put on my shoes and walk all the way back.

"For some months I avoided the young man from this village who was involved in my torture. Then one day the Lord worked a miracle in my heart, and I was able to forgive him. Instead of trying to avoid my tormentor, I went out of my way to greet him. I even went to his home and visited, as is our custom."

But this was not the end of his story. "About 15 years later, the same man who had tortured me was beaten to death by others from a nearby village. They had also suffered at his hand. I searched for his missing body and then sat with his widow. I helped his family dig the grave and bury the man who had tortured me—the man whom I once feared and hated."

When Ntate Motabola finished, he said, "I think I know how Jesus could forgive as he hung on the cross. The strength to forgive comes only from the Heavenly Father."
—Tina (Warkentin) Bohn

COM photo by John Bohn

"One day the Lord worked a miracle": Ntate Motabola repairs a bicycle seat in Tabola, Lesotho.

Three years later, I went to Tokyo to study. Another original member of the group served a congregation started by that early group of missionaries. Years later, the mission invited me to work in Kyushu, first as a literature worker, then as pastor of congregations started through those same missionaries.

The experiences I had in my earlier years as a Christian have shaped my understanding about the church. It is an autonomous fellowship of believers based on voluntary church membership and thoroughly dependent on the Lord. I thank the Lord for those good missionaries who helped me grasp this conviction by being faithful to their own sense of call.
—Hiroshi Yanada

COM photo by Glendon Klaassen

Being faithful to the sense of call: Pastor Hiroshi Yanada and Takako, his wife, on a suspension bridge near Miyazaki, Japan

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Dale D. Gehman

St. Louis 99 delegates take their turns at a microphone during one of the business sessions. Delegates approved a two-country structure for the new church. Canadian delegates also approved membership guidelines, but U.S. delegates put that decision on hold for two years.

1999 leaves aftershocks for new church

Merger, mission centennials, relief work mark year

This was the year the world shook, literally and figuratively. While earthquakes struck across the globe in 1999, tremors were also felt domestically as the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) continued the foundation-rattling process of forming a new church.

GC, MC and CMC delegates at July's joint convention in St. Louis signed off on measures to create parallel U.S. and Canadian entities under the banner of the new Mennonite Church. Canadian delegates approved the birth of Mennonite Church Canada, while U.S. delegates put the wheels in motion to create Mennonite Church USA in 2001. But despite the votes of approval, the two-country plan generated mixed responses. Supporters of the idea said Canada had often been marginalized by the U.S.-dominated church. But others lamented that the process, instead of creating one unified body, was realigning existing structures into two national ones.

While the Canadian congregations formed Mennonite Church Canada, the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church will continue to exist in the United States for at least another year and a half. U.S. delegates are expected to take final action on integration at their 2001 convention, to be held in Nashville, Tenn. But as part of the St. Louis actions, U.S. delegates replaced the GC and MC general boards with one Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. Lee Snyder of Bluffton, Ohio, was selected as the first moderator.

Even more controversial than the two-country plan was the membership issue. Participants at a March consultation on membership and homosexuality, held in Kansas City, hailed the meeting for fostering understanding and communication among church members of differing perspectives.

But cracks appeared at St. Louis, where several delegates raised the possibility of denominational defections. Because of the level of disagreement, U.S. delegates approved a resolution to delay a decision on membership for two years, while their Canadian counterparts overwhelmingly adopted membership guidelines, which allow for all current members to automatically become members of the new church. The fissures widened with a motion from the floor to reaffirm church statements that sexual activity is reserved for a man and a woman in a marriage relationship. MC delegates approved it, but GC delegates rejected it amid charges of railroading on a sensitive issue.

The new Constituency Leaders Council has provided a venue for resolving the issue. At the CLC's first meeting, in October, participants shared their hopes and fears about membership and homosexuality. A CLC committee is working on a draft of a membership proposal for the U.S. Executive Board in spring. U.S. delegates are expected to act on membership guidelines at the Nashville 2001 convention.

As part of the process of transforming current structures into a new church, some 300 congregations in the United States and Canada have provided feedback from the "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" study this fall. Results will be released at a January 2000 consultation in Elkhart, Ind.

While St. Louis 99 highlighted contentious issues in the church, it also was a time for

Mennonite
Church

New church takes flight with image

The new Mennonite Church took off this year with its visual identity. The image of a dove carrying an olive branch was approved as the symbol for the new body, created by the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

commemorating accomplishments in faithfulness. In a joint celebration during the convention, the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) observed their centennials. India was the first overseas mission field for both mission boards. The first MC missionaries arrived in 1899, while the first GC mission workers came a year later.

The Mennonite Church in India, founded by MBM, commemorated the centennial with November celebrations in Dhamtari, India. COM released a book, *Window to the World: Extraordinary Stories From a Century of Overseas Mission, 1900-2000* by former COM worker Tina Block Ediger (see pp. 6-7).

In conjunction with the centennial observances, COM and MBM, plus the Commission on Home Ministries and the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada, are beginning a New Century of Missions fund-raising campaign.

The concluding year saw three earthquakes affect Mennonites across the globe. A Jan. 25 quake hit eastern Colombia, killing thousands and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless. The Mennonite church in Armenia, Colombia, was severely damaged. Assistance came from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the General Conference Mennonite Church as well as from Mennonites in Colombia.

A Sept. 21 quake in Taiwan damaged one Mennonite church, and staff members from Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien mobilized to respond to medical needs elsewhere on the island.

MCC and Rosedale Mennonite Missions joined for a $250,000 relief effort in Turkey following an August earthquake that left more than 17,000 people dead. Through fund-raising events and contributions, Goshen (Ind.) College students, faculty and staff generated $24,000 for the project.

GCMC-MBM photo by Ron Flaming

The meeting place of Armenia Mennonite Church in Armenia, Colombia, was one of the casualties of a Jan. 25 earthquake that hit the country. On the other side of the globe, a quake on Sept. 21 damaged a Mennonite church building in Taiwan.

As other emergencies developed during the year, MCC, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions responded to the needs of refugees in the Balkans, committing personnel, funds and material resources to the situation. MCC constituents filled 35,000 refugee kits to be sent to the Balkans. Mennonites also helped sponsor refugees who came to North America.

The continuing development of the church outside North America was a recurring theme in 1999. Brazilian Mennonites in spring sent their first overseas missionaries, a family to Mozambique. A fledgling Australian-New Zealand Anabaptist group held its first meeting in June, while a South Korean group maintained its presence of community. The Italian Mennonite Church celebrated its 50th anniversary in November.

In light of this trend, North American Mennonite mission agencies in January agreed to plans for a global missions consultation to be held in July 2000. Organizers say they want mission strategies to be developed by all churches around the world, not just by the Western churches, which have traditionally sent overseas mission workers.

Mennonite World Conference, meanwhile, continued to broaden its work to include exchange programs, publishing and global get-togethers. The changes mean MWC is becoming a channel to connect Mennonites and Brethren in Christ across the world in ways beyond international assemblies every six years.

In other news of 1999:

- Regional integration continued to evolve. Plans are being drawn up for realignment of Northern District, Iowa-Nebraska and North Central conferences and of Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences.
- Mennonites and Catholics held their second round of talks, sponsored by MWC and the Vatican, to gain understandings and dispel misunderstandings of each other.
- Abraham and Sarah, the GC church-planting program, reached its goal of 50 new congregations two years ahead of schedule.
- MBM placed its first workers in a new program in Senegal.
- A new congregational peace initiative, called "Second Mile," was launched by GC and MC agencies, plus MCC and MCC Canada.
- Bluffton (Ohio) College started an academic year of celebrations in observance of the school's centennial.
- Lancaster Conference voted to credential women for all ministries except lead pastor and bishop.
- Mennonite Economic Development Associates began a new ethical investment fund.

—Rich Preheim

MBM photo by John F Lapp

India marks 100 years of missions

Former Mennonite Board of Missions worker Genevieve Friesen receives a shawl from C.F. Nath, Mennonite Church in India bishop, during ceremonies in November celebrating the church's centennial. India was the first overseas mission field for the Mennonite Church, which sent its first workers to the country in 1899. Friesen and her husband, John, served in the Dhamtari region from 1939 to 1972. They now live in Goshen, Ind. MBM and the Commission on Overseas Mission launched their centennial celebrations at St. Louis 99.

MBM takes steps to ensure uneventful Y2K

ELKHART, Ind.—Y2K has already had an effect on a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) short-term mission program. Nineteen Reaching and Discipling participants will wait until Jan. 11 and 12 to leave for assignments in Chile, Mexico, Northern Ireland and South Africa. Teams usually depart around Jan. 1.

"We think that sending participants out [later] gives us enough time to see what, if any Y2K problems develop," says Jorge Vallejos, MBM director of short-term missions.

In other preparations for Y2K, MBM advanced to selected workers funds that would normally be transferred in January. Some countries may not be ready for Y2K, which could affect money transfers for a few days after Jan. 1.

"It was that minor impact that we wanted to prepare for," says marketing director Allen Angell, a member of an MBM Y2K committee.—*MBM News Service*

Teacher honored for Low German literacy work

WINNIPEG—The University of Manitoba in Winnipeg has honored one of its instructors for her literacy work among the colony Mennonites of Mexico. Rosabel Fast, who teaches English to international students in the university's English Language Center, spent five weeks this past summer with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) teaching women and children to read Low German.

Many of the Mexican colonies speak Low German but are taught to read High German, which the Mennonites generally don't understand. Fast says it is important to teach reading skills in a language people understand.

Fast, who served with MCC in Mexico from 1992 to 1995, hopes to return next summer to develop an expanded literacy program.—*MCC Canada News Service*

GC coordinator appointed for mission campaign

NEWTON, Kan.—Harold D. Thieszen of North Newton has been named General Conference Mennonite Church coordinator for the New Century of Mission campaign, beginning in January 2000. The fund-raising campaign is being launched in conjunction with the centennials of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Also participating are the Commission on Home Ministries and the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada.

Thieszen most recently was director of fund development and marketing at Memorial Home in Moundridge, Kan. He has also done development and fund-raising work for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Bethel College, North Newton; and Kidron Bethel Retirement Community, North Newton.

John D. Yoder is the campaign coordinator for the Mennonite Church.

Chicago-area school earns accreditation

MARKHAM, Ill.—Community Mennonite Early Learning Center of Markham has received accreditation by the National Education Association of Young Children. Programs seeking accreditation undergo an intensive self-study and receive an on-site visit. All information is reviewed by a national panel, which grants or refuses accreditation applications. Accreditation is valid for three years.

The Chicago-area school serves 185 children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years. It was started in the Community Mennonite Church building in 1964 and staffed by Mennonite service workers during the early years.

by the way ...

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classifieds

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities in Lancaster County, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time adviser positions available in group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466. EOE

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment.

  Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; email emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for the following tenure-track faculty positions beginning fall semester 2000:

  Business/management: Doctorate (or ABD) in business administration, management, organization management, human resources management, or industrial/organizational psychology. Expertise in human resources, management and organization behavior. Graduate and undergraduate teaching.

  English: Ph.D. (or ABD) in English with specialization in British literature (Renaissance or later). Preference will be given to candidates with secondary expertise in humanities, composition studies and/or writing center supervision.

  Food & nutrition: Ph.D. preferred in food and nutrition, dietetics or family and consumer science; RD preferred. Background in FCS or FCS education helpful. Teach a range of courses in food and nutrition program that emphasizes dietetics, wellness and consumer services.

  Spanish: Ph.D. (or ABD) in Spanish. Teach courses at all levels in a small department with majors in Spanish and Spanish education. Coordinate study abroad placements for majors; participate in cross-cultural education, including off-campus study experiences.

  Special education: Doctorate (or ABD) with certification in special education (mild to moderate educational needs). Certification in elementary education (early childhood) preferred. Teach graduate and undergraduate courses and supervise field experiences and student teachers.

  Additional information is available at http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications for all positions will begin Jan. 18, 2000 (for Food & Nutrition, Feb. 1) and continue until appointments are made.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of references and official transcripts to Joetta H. Schlabach, special assistant to the dean of academic affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***Mennonite Foundation Central Region and MMA Capital Management Representative*** to develop and enhance relationships with people in central and eastern Ohio as well as western Pennsylvania. The Foundation provides planned giving support to an established donor constituency and charitable institutions. Qualifications for the position include the ability to understand and communicate charitable, estate and business planning concepts; good presentation skills; willingness to pursue CFP or ChFC designation and securities examinations; and a willingness to travel. MMA offers a competitive salary, excellent benefits and a positive work environment.

  Please fax letter of interest and resume to Cyndee Blue at 219-533-5264, or mail to MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527.

- **Employment opportunity:** ***Conference minister*** to serve South Central Conference beginning about June 1, 2000, with office in North Newton, Kan. Duties include oversight for congregations and pastors in Kansas, Oklahoma, south Texas, Arkansas and Missouri. Qualifications include strong relational skills, successful pastoral experience, and a heart for mission and outreach. Some administrative interest and/or experience desirable. Salary consistent with denominational guidelines.

  Contact Howard Hershberger, 634 S. Main, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-3171; email hohmlh@southwind.net

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Workers

Bal, Joan, was licensed Dec. 12 as a chaplain at Houston Mennonite Church.

Kaufman, S. Roy, was installed Nov. 7 as pastor of Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Lehman, Larry, was installed Oct. 31 as pastor of Mount Zion Mennonite Church, Frederick, Md.

Reid, Steve, on Dec. 1 began a pastorate at Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church.

Walls, Roy Jr., was installed Dec. 19 as pastor of Peace Community Church, Aurora, Colo.

Births

Alderfer, Isaac Ryan, Oct. 23, to Doug and Kathy (Gehman) Alderfer, Harrisonburg, Va.

Baton-Stawson, Maisha Clare, Nov. 2, to Tracy Baton and Mark Stawson, Pittsburgh.

Byler, Griffin Todd, Nov. 29, to Eugene and Holly (Kauffman) Byler, Allensville, Pa.

Case, Logan Matthew, Nov. 20, to Barbara (Lowery) and Phillip Case, Stuarts Draft, Va.

Franke, Elizabeth Marie, Nov. 24, to Corky and Mary Franke, Howe, Ind.

Freeman, Nathan Timothy, Nov. 25, to David and Mary Beth Freeman, Sierra Madre, Calif.

Garner, Madison Shae, Dec. 2, to Krista (Bethtold) and Scott Garner, Bainbridge, Pa.

High, Benjamin Thomas, Nov. 23, to Leida (Stauffer) and Thomas High, Appleton, Wis.

Kaldjian, Anne Elina, Oct. 22, to Paul Kaldjian and Meg Nord, Tucson, Ariz.

Kuepfer, Brittany Rose and Kirkland Rae (twins), Oct. 26, to Catherine (Kuepfer) and Lloyd Kuepfer, Poole, Ont.

Landes, Corrine McCalla, Jan. 5, 1999, received for adoption Dec. 10, by Jill (Schloneger) and John Landes, Ottsville, Pa.

Lucas, Erin Elizabeth, Oct. 6, to Cory and Sheila (Herrfort) Lucas, St. Marys, Ont.

Mast, Alexander Dakota, Oct. 22, to April and Shaun Mast, Chesapeake, Va.

Mast, Jared Gregory, Nov. 11, to Dawn (Culbertson) and Mark Mast, Reading, Pa.

Mast, Maddox Edward Michael, Nov. 5, to Emilie (Costikyan) and Merle Mast, Danville, Calif.

Miller, Justin Adam, Nov. 23, to Kevin and Wendy (Miller) Miller, Chesapeake, Va.

Richards, Neil Ryan, Oct. 20, to Dan and Sonya (Swartzentruber) Richards, Lansing, Mich.

Rolon, Deja Milana, Nov. 13, to Rose Malbon and Miguel Rolon, Columbus, Ohio.

Rush, Isaiah Paul, Dec. 7, to Chad and Rory (Hellerstedt) Rush, Portland, Ore.

Simonetti, Vincent William, Oct. 1, to Christopher and Victoria (Early) Simonetti, Harrisonburg, Va.

Thiessen, Hailey Malaika Ruth, Oct. 11, 1999, received for adoption Nov. 11, by Al and Robyn Thiessen, Nairobi, Kenya.

Weitkamp, Asa James, Nov. 28, to Clyde and Debbie (King) Weitkamp, Reading, Pa.

Zuercher, Peter Marshall, Nov. 8, to Amy and Eric Zuercher, Tucson, Ariz.

Correction: Gavin Wren Rusel's name was listed incorrectly as Garvin in the Dec. 7 births.

Marriages

Allen/Moss: Christopher Allen, Newport News, Va., and Laura Moss, Newport News, Nov. 27 at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Bergey/Shelly: Renita Bergey, Telford, Pa., and Jason Shelly, Telford, Dec. 4 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Blumber/Walter: Karen Blumber, Virginia Beach, Va., and Scott Walter, Virginia Beach, Dec. 4 at Grace Bible Church, Virginia Beach.

Doyle/Sollenberger: Shannon Doyle, Chambersburg, Pa., and Scott Sollenberger, Chambersburg, Sep. 25 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Gerdon/Widrick: David Gerdon, Castorland, N.Y., and Kristi Widrick, Beaver Falls, N.Y., Dec. 4.

Gerhart/Schumacher: Jennifer Gerhart, Coopersburg, Pa., and Bryan Schumacher, Oct. 16 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Jantz/Stucky: Janel Jantz, Inola, Okla., and Nathan Stucky, Kingman, Kan., Dec. 4 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.

Penner/Yeaman: Rodny Penner, Chicago, and Jona Yeaman, Chicago, Nov. 20 at Phoenix.

Schweitzer/Yeackley: Tracy Schweitzer, Friend, Neb., and Travis Yeackley, Milford, Neb., Nov. 6 at East Fairview Mennonite Church, Milford.

Deaths

Apple, Glenn, 77, McAlisterville, Pa., died Nov. 12. Spouse: Ellen Lauver Apple. Parents: George and Della Kauffman Apple (deceased). Other survivors: children Darwin, Donna Saner, Elaine Auker; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Delaware Mennonite Church, Thompsontown, Pa.

Bender, Elmon, 78, New Hamburg, Ont., died Nov. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Hilda Roth Bender. Parents: Aaron and Delila Ruby Bender (deceased). Other survivors: children Diane Gerber, Gary, Randy, Gail Scheerer; 14 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont.

Brubaker, Mabel, 100, Lititz, Pa., died Dec. 1. Parents: Christian and Fannie Brubaker (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 4 at Landis Homes, Lititz.

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Cook, Irene Shenk, 82, Wheat Ridge, Colo., died Nov. 26 of kidney failure. Spouse: Lester Cook. Parents: Jacob and Laura Johnson Shenk (deceased). Other survivors: children Donnis Pallaoro, Dale, Daryl, Duane; one grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 2 at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Epp, Marie, 101, Beatrice, Neb., died Nov. 14. Parents: Abraham and Margarethe Marie Wiebe Epp (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 17 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Folk, Dwight, 79, Springs, Pa., died Nov. 29. Spouse: Ferne King Folk. Parents: Bruce and Olive Kinsinger Folk (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Linda Hardesty, Richard; five grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Grantsville, Md.

Gerber, Vernon, 62, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 27 of cancer. Spouse: Karen Shantz Gerber. Parents: Emanuel and Elizabeth Stoltzfus Gerber (deceased). Other survivors: children Kelly Guinaugh, Jacqueline Jenner, Tracy Klopfenstein; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 30 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen. Memorial service: Dec. 2 at Fairview (Mich.) Mennonite Church.

Groff, Ellen Moore, 89, Lancaster, Pa., died Dec. 2. Spouse: Roy Groff. Parents: Harry and Hattie Althouse Moore (deceased). Other survivors: children Charles, John, Richard, Dorothy Allgyer; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 6 at Kinzer (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Kirkendall, Everett, 93, Elida, Ohio, died Nov. 15. Spouse: Ada Shenk (deceased). Parents: Noah and Mary Crone Kirkendall (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, Darrell, John, Wilmer, Helen Shenk, Ruth Evans; 22 grandchildren; four stepgrandchildren; 47 great-grandchildren; 13 stepgreat-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Elida.

Kiser, Della Wenger, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Oct. 9. Spouse: Carl Kiser (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Mary Heatwole Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children Gladys Rhodes, Ila Hartman, Raymond, Merle, Leroy, Glen; 19 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 11 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Center, Harrisonburg.

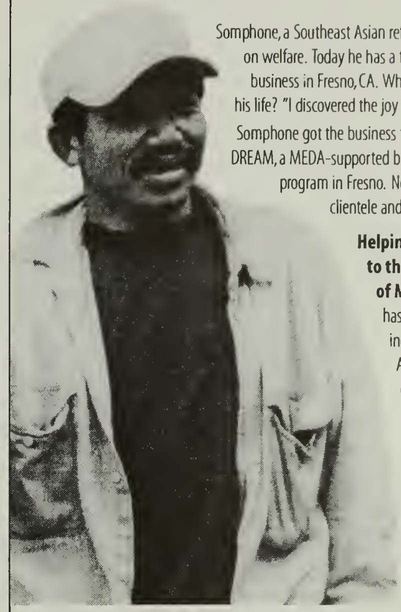
Krehbiel, Hilda Daycott-Smith, 89, Hanford, Calif., died Nov. 10 of cancer. Spouse: Walter Krehbiel (deceased). Survivors: children Patricia Briney, Paul Smith. Funeral: Nov. 17 at Woodlake, Calif.

Lehman, Edwin, 87, Kidron, Ohio, died Nov. 24 of pneumonia. Spouse: Ellen Lehman. Parents: Noah and Mary Kratzer Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: children Stan, Ralph, Larry, Steve, Diane Sommer, Lorie Troyer; 14 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 27 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Miller, Wilbur Winston, 73, Sun City, Ariz., died Dec. 2. Spouse: LeAnna Swartzendruber Miller. Parents: Perry and Della Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Doug, Janis Murray; three grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 5 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Mumaw, Ralph, 88, Smithville, Ohio, died Nov. 28. Spouse: Mildred Schrock Mumaw (deceased). Parents: Amos and Emma Rohrer Mumaw (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Klopfenstein, Mary Jane Fast, Wayne, Charles, Steve; 15 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Smithville Mennonite Church.

Reimer, Helen Mae Kinrade, 86, Reedley, Calif., died Nov. 10 of lymphoma. Spouse: Albert Reimer (deceased). Parents: Thomas and Minnie Kinrade (deceased). Survivors: children Stanley, Carol Twitty. Funeral: Nov. 16 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.



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Roth, Barbara Ann Schweitzer, 60, Seward, Neb., died Dec. 4 of cancer. Spouse: Kenneth Roth (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Marie Roth Schweitzer (deceased). Survivors: children Peggy Fry, Douglas, Paula; five grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Yoder, Duane, 75, Kalona, Iowa, died Nov. 24. Spouse: Ellen Yoder. Parents: Eli and Esther Brenneman Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children LaVerta Eberly, Jerry, Susan Gingerich, Jane Borntrager, Miller, Verle, Colette Cortum; 15 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 28 at Kalona, Iowa.

Announcements of workers, births, marriages and deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event. Event announcements are listed within approximately two months before the event.

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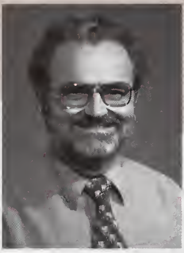

J. Lorne Peachey

Reality check

During our two years together, *The Mennonite* staff has been able to come to agreement on most things—except one: the start of the new millennium. The majority believes the date is Jan. 1, 2000. One holds out for Jan. 1, 2001.

Much as I hate to admit it, I've discovered truth to be on the side of the hold-out. According to *The Washington Post* (Dec. 2, 1999), the problem goes all the way back to the Dark Ages. When Dionysius Exiguus thought up the now universal Gregorian calendar, he wasn't familiar with the mathematical concept of zero. So the first 12 months he called year 1. Since then, we've found zero, so today you're not 1 until you've lived for 12 months. Unfortunately, we've come to apply the same to centuries and millennia, even though calculating them didn't start out that way.

Our perceptions are always flawed, possible reflections of the truth but never the complete truth themselves.

Until now it hasn't mattered much. But on the verge of a new millennium, sticklers about time are pushing for the truth (we get a letter or an email on this one every week). "There's no question that the purists are right," says Edward McNally of the Millennium Society. At the same time, he admits, there's something about going from 1999 to 2000. He likens it to the "odometer rolling over on the family Chevy. It's visceral."

Even as distinguished an institution as the Naval Observatory, keeper of the Master Clock of the United States, is bowing to popular perception and celebrating millennial change on Dec. 31, 1999. But, in a nod to reality, the observatory also plans another celebration 12 months from now.

All this fuss about the changing millennia may seem a bit silly. But it is a good reminder that for us humans perception almost always wins out over reality.

Take, for example, the history of the people of God as outlined in the Bible. Israel allowed its perception of the enemy in Canaan to cloud the reality of God's protection, so the clan wandered in the wilderness for 40 years (Numbers 13–14). Their perception that living under a king would be better than God's judges (1 Samuel 8) landed them under all sorts of tyrannies. In the New Testament, Nathaniel voiced the popular perception, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"—a perception that led many to miss the Messiah (John 1:46).

The church's history continues to be littered with the casualties of perception. The Crusades came because the Turks of the Middle Ages were seen to be destroying Christianity. Our own history has martrys in part because the Anabaptists of the 16th century were thought to be against government. More recently modernism, communism, liberalism, new age—the list of perceived threats against the church continues to grow, even though we have the reality of Jesus' words that nothing, not even hell, will destroy it (Matthew 16:18).

Even after 2000 (or 1999) years, the temptation to substitute perception for reality continues. The way we come to perceive God is the way we think all others should experience God too. Because we find security in how we order our lives, we believe others should live the same way.

As we change millennia, either this year or next, we do well to admit that, at best, we see "in a mirror, dimly" (1 Corinthians 13:12). We must confess that we do the best we can, knowing that the way we see things is not ultimate truth. That is God's domain. Humbly, we must admit that our perceptions are always flawed, possible reflections of the truth but never the complete truth themselves. When we are free to admit that, we are well on the way to lowering the noise and lessening the conflicts—in our world, in our church, even in ourselves.

Happy new year. New century. New millennium. Now. And a year from now.—*jlp*

Y2K in perspective

Alice, age 94, has a Y2K problem. But it's not with her computer; it's with her tombstone.

According to Philip Gulley in his book *For Everything a Season* (Multnomah, 1999), after her second husband's death in 1981, Alice bought a tombstone to save her survivors that problem. On it she had chiseled her birth, 1905, and space for her death, 19—.

Only problem is, Alice was still alive in December and will likely see the change in millennia. About her tombstone she says, "It's going to be somebody else's problem. I can't worry about it."

Someone else will be her son Jack. "He'll take care of it," says Alice. "He's a good boy!"

That kind of trust in each other will get us all through a lot of problems in the new millennium, Y2K and otherwise.—*jlp*